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OUR LITTLE JUGOSLAV COUSIN

MILOSH TENDING SHEEP. (*See page 24.*)

Our Little Jugoslav Cousin

By

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PREFACE

DEAR CHILDREN:

This is a story of a people who, all belonging to one section of the Slavonic race, were long unwillingly kept apart by foreign dominating governments. The Allies' victory in the World War freed them and made their re-union possible. Whether or not this union will continue indefinitely as the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes, or later become the republic of which some idealists dream, or any other political changes take place, the essential oneness remains, and the pictures of life depicted in this little book will continue on the whole true.

As you read about Milosh, Churo, Zorka, and the others, with their many fine inheritances, I am sure that you will be glad with me of the possibilities of continued progress that have now opened up for these particular Little Cousins in the Old World.

CLARA VOSTROVSKY WINLOW.

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Our Little Jugoslav Cousin

CHAPTER I

A CROATIAN COUNTRY HOME

It was late afternoon on an April day in a little village in Croatia, near the borders of Bosnia, both of which states are part of the new Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes.

In the courtyard of one of the bright blue, plaster-covered brick houses, little three year old Zorka had just had one of her happy tumbles. She was up in a minute, and trying to reach the blossoms with which the pear trees growing against the walls, and the low apricot and peach trees were already covered. She had succeeded in touching one with the tip of one of her little pink fingers, when her eleven year old brother, Milosh, came out to take her in to supper.

"You're dirty, Zorka," Milosh said disap-

provingly, and proceeded to brush off her dress. "I'll wash you when we get in," he added.

Zorka hung on to her brother's hand and gazed affectionately up at him. Milosh made some funny faces to cause her to laugh, and then smiled at her, and once even kissed her while he wiped her face and hands with the end of a wet towel.

When they entered the living-room, Zorka's father was already seated on a bench before a long table whose beautifully carved legs were some of his own work. The mother was bringing in a big dish of smoked mutton, some goat's cheese, and boiled cornmeal.

The house was furnished very simply, but there was a certain air of comfort about it. The big blue and green tiled stove, on which shone polished copper pots and at whose side stood a handloom, lent an especial air of brightness to the room. So did the colored earthenware that hung on hooks in a corner; the good-sized carved and stained baby crib, in which Zorka was still able to sleep, and, near the loom, the numerous long, gaily dyed hanks of flax and hemp hanging on special pegs. On the opposite side were strings of red peppers festooned against the wall, which the

mother, with an eye to the beauty of color contrast, had alternated with strings of onions and garlic.

Potted rosemary mingled its spicy fragrance with that of dried herbs of various kinds that hung near the outer entrance. A painted high-backed chair, reserved for guests, stood unoccupied at the head of the table, while back of it was a tall home-made cupboard. On the wall opposite the stove hung two prints, one representing an old-time Croatian wedding and the other Mary Magdalene washing the feet of Jesus.

Next to this living-room was a small and rather dark room, in which were two beds with straw mattresses covered with bright home-spun blankets of strange design. Between the beds stood a big, strongly made chest in which the Sunday clothes and all the household treasures were kept.

Several bunches of both dried and freshly gathered herbs and flowers had been placed on this chest, and before the mother sat down to supper she brushed them all into her apron and threw them into a big tub of water.

"Hurrah for St. George!" shouted Milosh as he watched her. Long before daylight he, as well as every other member of the family,

would bathe in this perfumed water, for was not to-morrow April twenty-third or St. George's Day? And didn't everybody in the village observe the custom? Milosh did not know just why this was done, but he did know that the same ceremony had been performed even before his grandfather's time. He shared the village belief, too, that if he let even the first ray of sunlight touch him before he bathed, some misfortune would surely happen to him during the year.

He was thinking of this when the door opened and a man walked in. The father arose with hands outstretched:

"Welcome, Rade!" he said. "Sit down with us. Whatever we have is also yours."

The man shook hands, and taking off his tall sheep-skin cap, sat down at the head of the table. Then without ceremony he cut off a piece of the cornmeal with a string used for that purpose.

He was evidently a Serbian rather than a Croatian, for in contrast with the blue eyes and light chestnut hair of his host, he had big brown eyes, dark hair, and a long, dark brown mustache.

"Now tell us," said the father when he saw

his guest had eaten a little, "how you found things in our big city Zagreb."

"Everything thriving," responded Rade. "A great city that! It compares well with our Serbian Capital, Belgrade. I was taken among interesting folks," he added after a pause. "Why, my cousin goes to the Academy, the one founded by Bishop Strossmayer, and he belongs to an Art Club. You should hear the things they talk about! Seems as if hardly any one could paint a picture or make a statue to suit them. I remember some one they all praised though: It was our Dalmatian shepherd sculptor, Ivan Mestrovich. They just couldn't stop talking about him. I asked my cousin what he had done and he showed me some figures and said they symbolized the union of all the Jugoslav States. He added that Mestrovich believed in this union long before the World War made it a fact. I don't know much about art, however, and I enjoyed the park and the botanical gardens more."

Here Milosh wanted to ask whether they were preparing to observe St. George's Day in Zagreb, but his father stopped him with a look, and changed the talk to the discussion of an improved plow that he understood that

Rade had bought while away. The father had little faith in its superiority to the old-fashioned plow that he still used, and the discussion lasted, much to the boy's disgust, until the guest left.

Milosh soon forgot this, for when getting ready for bed he remembered that to-morrow night he was to help some of his schoolmates in building a big bonfire on the hillside, around which they would have a chance to play all sorts of pranks.

CHAPTER II

A SCHOOL DAY

EVERYBODY at Milosh's house usually rose with the sun, so that when the tuneless bell from the little village church called the children to school a few days after St. George's Day, Milosh had not only long been ready, but had performed several chores while at the same time taking care of dear little rosy-cheeked Zorka.

The schoolhouse differed from the other houses of the village mainly in having a bigger door than any of them, a wooden cross on the roof, and many more windows. These windows could never have been measured, for no two of them were the same size.

The teacher was a very serious looking man and quite old. He wore a long coat, and, as one of his brighter pupils observed, always carried his sign about with him: this was the ink spots on his white vest. Whenever he had to read or needed to look at anything else closely, he put on heavy, ancient-looking

glasses, with long wires that went back of his ears. Out of doors, in warm weather, he invariably carried a big blue umbrella either above his head or under his arm. But despite his ugly glasses and the two big wrinkles that much worrying had plowed deep between his eyes, he was a kind man and his pupils were fond of him.

As soon as the children arrived and before they settled down to their studies there were always prayers, followed by songs, often of a religious character, for the teacher was also the church soloist and liked the opportunity given him of practice in school.

There were many holidays, like that of St. George, but every child up to the age of twelve was expected to attend school on ordinary days. Very few dreamed of continuing their studies after the required time. This week, however, the teacher was quite elated and excited over the announcement that Mitar, the son of the richest villager, was to have an extra year of schooling in Zagreb.

Mitar's schoolmates did not envy him this additional schooling, but their imaginations were fired by all that he was going to see and experience in the beloved capital of their country. Mitar, on his part, needed little en-

couragement to stimulate their wonder still more. Every opportunity he had, he enlarged on all that by any chance he had heard or imagined regarding Zagreb.

"They eat differently there," he would say. "They don't have cornmeal every day, but all sorts of other things; so many you can't count them, on gold plates, everything on a separate plate, and you take a little from one, and a little from another, and a little from—"

Here he was interrupted by a stalwart boy whose family had lately moved to the village from Herzegovina; although no older he was fully a head and a half taller than Mitar, who was small for his age and sensitive about it. Looking down at him the Herzegovinian remarked scornfully:

"Perhaps you think all those littles will make a big man of you, eh?"

Mitar flushed and clenched his fists, and it was a fortunate thing perhaps that the teacher came along just then.

After school Milosh could not resist teasing Mitar by calling out:

"By eating a little and a little and a little, you'll get big, won't you Mitar?"

This resulted in Mitar chasing Milosh, and he might have overtaken him had not both

been attracted by a number of the younger children, who were dismissed earlier from school, suddenly starting to run and scream like wild creatures.

"What's the matter?" yelled both boys.

They got no answer until they caught up with a little six year old fellow, who explained the youngsters' excitement by:

"Big frog—great big frog—in hole; Churo says he'll spit magic at us."

CHAPTER III

A HALF HOLIDAY

It was a school half-holiday. Milosh had been so busy with chores for a part of it that he was quite glad when his mother said he need do nothing more but take care of his little sister.

Zorka had on an old dress made just like one of her mother's, with short full skirt, and a little red bodice laced over a white chemise. Worn though it was, it was nevertheless still nice and clean, and Milosh liked it because the older girls always examined a bit of odd red and blue embroidery design on it, which his mother had brought with her from her girlhood home in Dalmatia, one of the Serbian speaking States. Zorka looked so dear, in truth, when he appeared with her on the board walk in front of the general store, that it was no wonder two girls at once ran up to admire and pet her.

"Do let me take care of her," begged Ziba.

"No, let me have her," begged Ivana.

"We'll play house and she'll be my little girl."

Milosh was quite used to this, for Zorka was the prettiest child in the village; her eyes were so big and round and blue, her cheeks so rosy, and her hair so curly and sunny. He proudly shook his head, not because he did not wish to give up his responsibility, but because he did not intend giving it up too cheaply. He tossed back his hair and lifted his chest until he felt that he must look as important as Obren Gulicich, the *starosta* or chief official of the village.

Now it happened that Mitar was also free, and was just coming around a corner. Seeing his chance of getting even with Milosh for his teasing, he ran up quickly behind him and gave him a hard whack between the shoulders with his doubled fist. Milosh, taken by surprise, forgot his dignified air, and thrusting Zorka into Ivana's arms, turned like a flash and was after his assaulting schoolmate.

It was a full half hour before the two boys returned together, frowzled and dirty, but chattering like the friends they really were. The girls had disappeared, and it took the boys some time before they found them seated in a clay pit a short distance back of the low stone village church. They were playing that

they were making pottery, just as they had often seen their mothers make it.

Much as they would have liked to join in the girls' play, the boys pretended to scorn it. They placed themselves at a little distance, and taking out their knives, seemed to be wholly absorbed in whittling. But after two or three minutes of this, they could not help shouting jesting remarks at the girls. The latter only glanced at them out of the corners of their eyes.

"Ask your mother for the ax, Zorka," said Ziba, "so that I can pound this nice lot of clay."

Zorka toddled up to Ivana, her play-mother, who handed her a short stout stick, with the caution:

"Now be careful, Zorka, not to cut yourself on the way."

Zorka, all smiles, toddled back to Ziba, who, kneeling down, began to pound vigorously at the clay.

"I must have some goats' hair to mix with it next," she called as she bent with flushed face over her work.

Before Ivana could decide what substitute to use for goats' hair, Milosh sprang up, and nudging Mitar, shouted:

"Wait and we'll get some real goat's hair!"

The girls, who had been pretending to be quite unaware of the boys' presence, now showed their interest as they watched the two run madly, not, as they expected, to some goats pasturing nearby, but to a neighbor's goat pen. They soon returned, each holding a handful of the real thing.

"Thank you," said both girls with shy warmth, and then turned back to their play.

Spreading the hair on a stone, Ivana began to chop at it, but evidently without satisfaction to herself, for she sighed as she handed it to Ziba with the remark:

"You can mix it with the clay now. I can't chop it any finer."

"Gosh, do you call that chopped!" Milosh burst out. "Come Mitar, let's show them how to do it."

Then how the boys did slash with their knives until some of the hair was really cut, while the rest went flying away on all sides! They were repaid by Ziba's and Ivana's admiring appreciation. The latter gathered up what she could, and Ziba began to mix it adroitly with the clay.

In the meantime, Ivana, with Zorka's help, was picking up all the stray sticks of wood they

could find, and piling them in a little heap. On top of them she placed an old empty tin can that some one had thrown away.

"Don't go too near the fire," Zorka was warned.

This time the little girl did not understand quickly.

"Where fire?" she asked.

"Why, you stupid little pigeon," returned Ivana, giving her a hug, "isn't it always under the pot when you're boiling water?"

When a little later she carried this can over to her playmate, the boys laughed and laughed at her, but Ziba nevertheless said with a serious face:

"Don't spill any of the hot water on me."

"I'll be careful," returned Ivana, as she began pouring nothing at all from the can.

Nothing seemed to be all right, for Ziba began to work some more of the clay, and then shape it with her hands.

While she did this, the play-mother built a little oven of stones which her little "daughter" brought to her, and into this Ziba's bits of clay, which the girls called "pots" and "cups" and "dishes," were placed to bake.

The boys had been whispering, but whatever they were planning became impossible to do,

for all the children were now called home.

When the girls visited the place next day on their way home from school, some goats were pasturing nearby and the oven was completely destroyed.

"Dear me; whatever *will* we cook our food in!" said Ziba, still full of the previous day's make-believe.

CHAPTER IV

A DAY AT THE FAIR

THERE had been nothing talked about for a whole week by the school boys and the school girls, nor by anybody else in the village for that matter, except the big yearly Fair to be held in a neighboring town of some size. Those whose families were planning to go—and there were many of these—were envied by those less fortunate.

Milosh was so excited over the fact that his father had promised to take him, that he could hardly sleep the night before. He even woke once around midnight to call out: "Papa, isn't it time? We mustn't be late!"

Although they had not planned to start until six, he was up at four, and made so much noise that the whole family soon followed his example of extra early rising. Breakfast was prepared, and by six o'clock Milosh was triumphantly riding in a creaking cart drawn by two brown, wiry little horses.

Part of the distance to the Fair was by the

river road. There was already a steady stream of vehicles on it, and also many men, women and children on foot, all in their brightest of holiday clothes.

Near the first house on the outskirts of the town, they passed two aged Gypsy musicians, and a group of three beggars, two of whom were lame, and one blind. There was something in the faces of these persons that made it apparent that for them, also, the Fair held out pleasant prospects.

The horses, who had covered the road at a rapid trot, were halted in the courtyard of a *gostina,* or inn, where there was already an assemblage of vehicles of all kinds. The chattering and noise was most exciting to Milosh, and he kept constantly glancing around as he helped his father unharness the team. This duty done, he joined a bare-footed servant, dressed in white, who was carrying fodder around not only to the horses, but also to the big-horned oxen lying on the ground. Numerous ducks, geese, chickens and pigeons still more enlivened the scene by now claiming their right to a share in this food, and now gathering noisily around a pump at one end of the enclosure.

When the servant again went indoors, and

while Milosh's father talked to the landlord, the boy strolled to the front of the inn where he found two other boys, somewhat older than himself, admiring the rough frescoes on the walls. These frescoes represented scenes in the life of the wonderful Marko Kralyevich, the great national hero of all the Serbian-speaking people. One of them showed the stalwart Marko mounted on his splendid piebald charger Sharatz, in the act of hurling his hundred pound mace high into the clouds. Another illustrated the famous meeting with the *vila* (fairy) Raviyola, who jealous of the singing of Marko's loyal friend Milosh, kills the latter, but when pursued and caught by the hero Marko, restores him to life.

"Do you remember," asked one of the trio, "that story in which it says that on his tent was an apple of gold, in which were two large diamonds which shed a light so far that even the neighboring tents needed no candles?"

The boys nodded, serious faced.

"And do you remember," the other boy put in, "what Marko made the Magyar General Voutchka pay him and his friend Milosh as a ransom?"

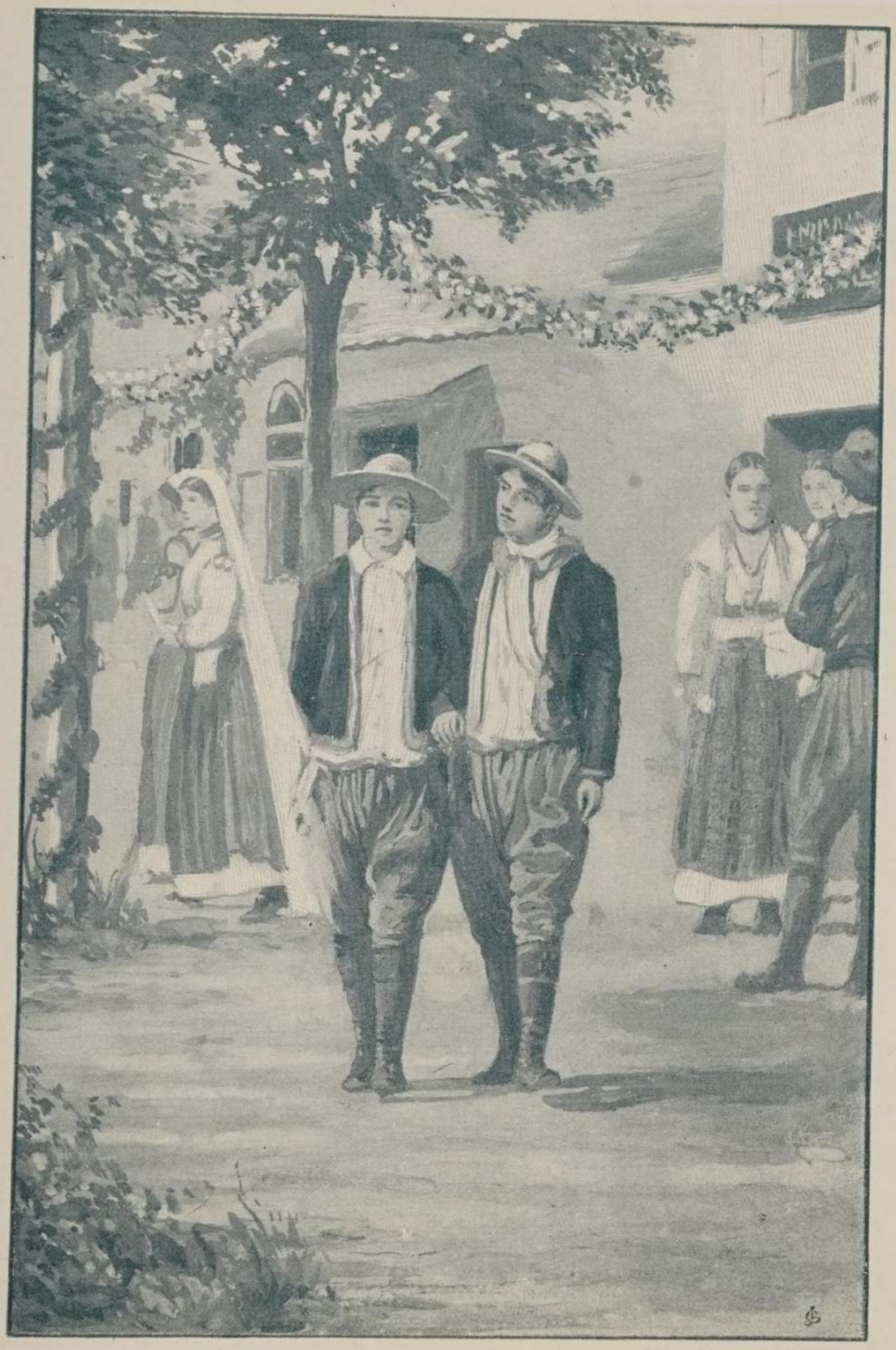
"Indeed I do," quickly responded the first

boy. "It was three *tovars* [1] of gold for each of them, and the gilded coach drawn by twelve Arabian horses which the General used when visiting the Austrian empress, and oh, so many other things!"

Milosh, like all his race, knew and loved this legendary history; but interesting as the pictures were, he was too impatient to get to the Fair itself not to be ready when his father called to him.

The grounds were only a short distance away. What a colorful place it was! What a variety of costumes was to be seen! Many of the women had on what looked like two overlapping aprons to form a skirt, a loose white linen bodice with wide sleeves, and a third small apron much embroidered. They seemed fond of scarfs, for they wore a wide red one around the waist and a narrower one, tied in a bow in front, across the chest. Some had white stockings and bright red or yellow sandals. And all had jewelry of some kind: coral or bead necklaces, silver bracelets or earrings, and even gold ones. Mingling with them, and in strange contrast to them, were veiled Mohammedan women, who looked, as some one said, just like black beetles.

[1] Tovar . . . as much as a horse could carry on its back.



"WHAT A COLORFUL PLACE IT WAS! WHAT A VARIETY OF COSTUMES WAS TO BE SEEN!"

Most of the men wore long white coats reaching almost to the knees, with the upper part open so as to show scarlet vests decorated with silver buttons and fastened around the waists with broad, ornamented, silver belts. Their loose trousers were of thin, light material, and they wore either high-topped boots, or sandals called *opankas*. Somehow these bright costumes made every one look gay and happy.

There were so many, many things for sale! One could buy decorated dishes, sheep skins, pigs, home-cured olives, linen, embroideries, carpets, wine, *opankas,* beads, caps. . . . It would take too long to name them all! There were not only Serbian-speaking people in charge of the booths, but also Turks with melancholy expressions who sat before their stalls of oriental goods with legs crossed.

Among the most interesting booths were those of the goldsmiths and silversmiths who made filigree jewelry, some of it so fine as to be worth much money. Milosh wanted to buy a very pretty pin for his mother, but, as he explained to her later: "The crazy fellow wanted more for it than what we could get for one of our best pigs!"

Of course one of the big pleasures of the

day, for the children especially, was eating away from home. Milosh's father understood, for he soon stopped before a man with a charcoal stove and bought some cabbage soup for himself and son. A little later he stopped again and this time they had some stew, which a man peddled about in a drum-shaped box fastened with straps around his neck and resting on his stomach.

Before their lunch time came, Milosh had gone to one of the shows, where he saw a poor little calf with six legs, and some trained white mice who astonished and delighted him with their tricks.

He had still a little money to spend, and some of it went for a whistle and some brightly colored candy; then he remembered Zorka and that he must bring her something very special.

His father had left him to wander about by himself, so he could not ask him for his advice, and for a while he was much puzzled. He was reluctantly making up his mind that there was nothing his money could buy but another stick of candy, when his face lightened. He had caught sight of a tray with rings of all kinds, and he felt sure that one would look well on one of Zorka's little fingers.

There were quite a few children about this

tray. They were eagerly trying on rings that pleased them. Milosh took fully five minutes before he chose a tiny circlet, with a big red stone that made him think of Zorka's cheeks. It cost all the remaining two pennies of his money!

The way home seemed much longer than had the way to the Fair in the fresh morning breeze. There were only two things that kept Milosh awake. One was his curiosity as to what was in some of the packages his father was taking home; and the other his anxiety,—a big anxiety lest he should lose the ring for Zorka and a lesser anxiety in regard to the stick of candy, which he hadn't eaten, but intended to present to his mother.

CHAPTER V

SUMMER DUTIES AND PLEASURES

As soon as school vacation came, one of Milosh's duties was to take ten pigs that the family owned, to pasture in the woods on the mountain sides. This meant an easy life, to which he, like all the other boys, long looked forward. A large part of the time one could lie on one's back in some shaded place, and watch the tiny clouds in the sky or the big birds that sometimes circled in the air.

There were more flocks of sheep than of pigs in these mountains, and there were also herds of cattle, the bells of the last always awakening the sheep in the morning. This was not the only music, for most of the herders played on rude flutes they themselves made, or sang their beloved folk songs.

There was not a tree on the hills that Milosh did not know and that he did not climb. He made friends with the squirrels and followed them to their holes. He grew fond of the pigs, too, particularly of a little one, and he

had names for all of them. Sometimes he did not go home, but slept at night with other herd boys in a rude hut, where the provisions were kept out of reach of stray wild creatures.

The pigs were brown, with bristly hair down their arched backs, enormous snouts, big ears, and very curly tails. Milosh carried a long stick with which he tapped them when they lingered too long or were inclined to stray. When the pigs hurried forward where they expected a feast they kept even so active a boy on the jump. The little pig was especially quick, and several times rushed forward so recklessly that it slid on the mossy ground and sat right down on its funny curled tail. Whenever it did so, its little pink eyes would look oddly at Milosh, who always came running up, and it would give a squeak.

"Tut, tut," Milosh would say, giving it a gentle poke, "can't you watch where you're going?"

When a particularly good pasture was found, the pigs were left to root and munch acorns, which they interlarded with grunts of satisfaction. Then Milosh would lie down under the trees and think of songs that he might sing and dream of many other things.

One day he saw a snake glide into a hole,

and he marked the spot with stones, for, like all of his schoolmates, he believed that snakes guard treasures.

Zorka missed her brother greatly during this time of the year. One day she found herself particularly lonesome. Her mother had taken her and her dolly to the field where she was working, and had left the little one to play by herself. But Zorka was not very happy until another girlie named Draga, who lived near by, came over to make friends with her.

Draga showed her what fun it was to hop on one foot while holding the other in the hand. Together they hunted for "fairy rings," and then for snails, repeating some funny rhymes about these little creatures as they did so. But Zorka was made happiest when they found a narrow linen bag, which her new friend said would make a dress for her doll. Alas, it would not go on, although both tried to push dolly into it.

"She's too fat," said Draga. "My uncle went to a hospital and got awfully thin. Let's play she goes to a hospital and has an o-per-a-tion."

Zorka laughed with delight, while Draga hunted for a sharp stone. "It is to let the

doll bleed," she said. And she actually succeeded in making a hole in the side of the doll's cloth body, so that half the sawdust came out.

"This is blood," the little girl explained; "and the dolly may die, and then we'll have to have a funeral."

Zorka burst out crying at this, and Draga to comfort her decided the doll wouldn't die, and was much nicer because she would now be able to wear the new dress. And sure enough, the doll was so thin that it was quite easy to slip her body into the bag.

Zorka's mother, however, did not seem to agree with the little girl about the dolly, for when she came up she scolded her, so that Draga in her turn cried. The mother could not have this, so tired though she was, she sat down, and putting her arms around both children, told them a strange folk story.

CHAPTER VI

A FOLK NONSENSE STORY

ONCE a poor man sent his son to a nearby mill to have some corn ground.

"But if you find that the miller is beardless," he cautioned, "beware of him, for he's crafty, too. Take the corn, in that case, to another mill."

The boy promised to observe this and set out. When he reached the mill he was disappointed to find that the miller had not a hair on his face.

"What do you want?" asked the latter.

"I was going to grind some corn," returned the boy; "but I guess I won't." And he made his way to the next mill.

Now the miller resolved to outwit him. Taking a short cut he was there before him. The boy was surprised to find another beardless miller, and again left. But the miller again took a short cut to the third mill and reached it first, and when the boy left, hurried on to the fourth.

On seeing him the fourth time, the boy made up his mind that all millers must be beardless, and believing it was useless to seek further, asked the miller's permission to grind his corn.

This was granted. When he had finished doing so, the miller placed himself before him and said:

"That's a nice lot of corn, but it'll be easier to carry if we change it into a loaf of bread."

The boy did not know how to refuse, for the miller had already taken it up and was mixing it with water. Then they fired the oven and baked the bread.

When it was nicely browned the miller took it from the oven and placed it against the wall.

"If we divide this," he argued, "there won't be enough for either of us. Let's tell stories, and give the loaf to the one who can think of the biggest whoppers."

The boy again did not know how to refuse this suggestion, so he yielded and they sat down opposite the loaf.

The miller began his story first. When he had finished he told another and another until he was tired. The boy listened, but all the time he was thinking hard, for he wanted to win.

When the miller stopped, the boy remarked:

"Do you call those whoppers? Why there's nothing to them! Just wait until you hear my story!"

The Boy's Story

"In my younger days when I was an old man, we had many hives full of bees. I counted the bees every morning, but, try hard as I would, I never could count the hives. One morning I missed our best bee. So I went into the barnyard and mounting our rooster set off in search of it. I learned it had gone to the sea, which it had crossed. So I made my way there and crossed also. On the other side I found a peasant plowing his field with the bee, and sowing grain.

" 'That is my bee,' I said.

" 'Then you can have it,' returned the peasant. 'And here is a sackful of grain to pay for all it has done for me.'

"I put the sack on my back, took the saddle from the rooster, put it on the bee, and mounted, leading the rooster by a string behind. One of the fastenings of the sack broke as we flew, and all the grain fell into the water before I could help it.

"It was night when we reached the other side. Before I lay down to sleep I let the bee

loose to graze, but tied the rooster near me, after giving him some hay to eat.

"The next morning I was shocked to find that wolves had attacked and eaten my bee, and that honey was spread knee deep throughout the valley and ankle deep on the hillsides. I wanted to gather it up, but had no vessel. So I took my little ax and went into the woods to find some animal from which to make a skin. Here I saw two deer dancing on one leg. I threw my ax against this leg and broke it, so that both deer fell.

"Out of the two deer I drew three skins, which I made into bags into which I gathered all the honey. I hoisted these on the rooster and we set out for home.

"When we reached it, I found that my father had just been born. As some holy water was wanted for the christening, I was sent to heaven to fetch it.

"I did not know how to get there until I remembered the grain which I had spilled. I hurried to the sea and saw from a distance that the grain had sprouted. It reached quite to heaven.

"I climbed up one stalk. Before I reached the top, I found the grain had ripened and that an angel had harvested it and made a loaf of

bread from it. He was just eating this, with a little warm milk, when I came up to him. I begged him for some holy water, which he kindly gave me.

"On my way back, I found that a big rain had caused the sea to rise so high that it had washed away all the plants. I was frightened until I remembered that my hair is so long that when I stand it reaches to the ground, and when I sit it reaches to my ears. I cut off one hair after another and tying them together, descended on them.

"But night came before I reached the bottom. Not willing to hang there, I made a bigger knot in the hair and rested on it until morning. It was cold and I needed a fire. I did not know what to burn until I happened to think that I had a sewing needle in my pocket. I took this out, split it into several pieces, and made a big fire. Feeling now quite comfortable, I fell asleep.

"Unfortunately as I slept a flame leaped up and burnt through my hair, so that I fell down with such force that I sank into the earth up to my waist. I was wedged in so tightly I couldn't get out until I hastened home and returned with a spade. With this I dug myself to the surface.

"I then took the holy water and proceeded on my way. When I reached our fields, I saw many reapers working in the hot sun. Pitying them, I cried:

" 'Why do you not get our mare who is two day's journey long and half a day's journey broad, and on whose back big willow trees are growing?'

"My father had not thought of her. He ran at once, brought her back, and the men then worked in the shade.

"I took a jug to fetch some water for them, that they might work still better, for the perspiration was pouring down their cheeks. I found the well frozen. Having nothing else handy, I took off my head to break the ice with it. Then I carried the water to the men.

"When they saw me they cried:

" 'Where is your head?'

"I put my hands on my shoulders and found that I had forgotten my head by the well.

"I hurried back, and there I saw a fox eating it. Very angry, I kicked the animal so hard that it dropped a little book. I picked this up and opening it, read these words:

" 'The whole loaf is for you. The beardless miller has lost the wager.' "

The boy here snatched up the loaf of bread, and without even saying good-by, ran off, while the miller sat with his mouth wide open, too astonished to move.

CHAPTER VII

IN DALMATIA

THE favorite sister of Milosh's mother Militza, whose home was in the neighboring sister state of Dalmatia, was to be married, and all of Milosh's family planned to go to the wedding. First, however, the home had to be put in order, and then the washing done.

Milosh helped his mother in the latter by carrying some of the clothes for her to a stream that made its way through the village. Then he hurried back to take care of little Zorka.

Several neighbors also came to do their washing. There was so much chatting that it seemed more like a gathering for play than for work. But the latter was nevertheless very carefully done, for the women prided themselves on the snowiness of their linen.

First each woman chose a big stone in the stream for her own. On this she placed piece after piece of her strong home-woven garments, and with another stone pounded at them until the dirt was all loosened. Then she

rinsed the clothes several times in the running water, and, finally, spread them in the green grass to bleach and dry.

In the meantime Milosh was trying his best to make Zorka properly appreciate the great treat in store for them. "We're going, oh, so very far!" he said again and again.

"We going," repeated Zorka, clapping her little hands and gazing wonderingly up at her big brother.

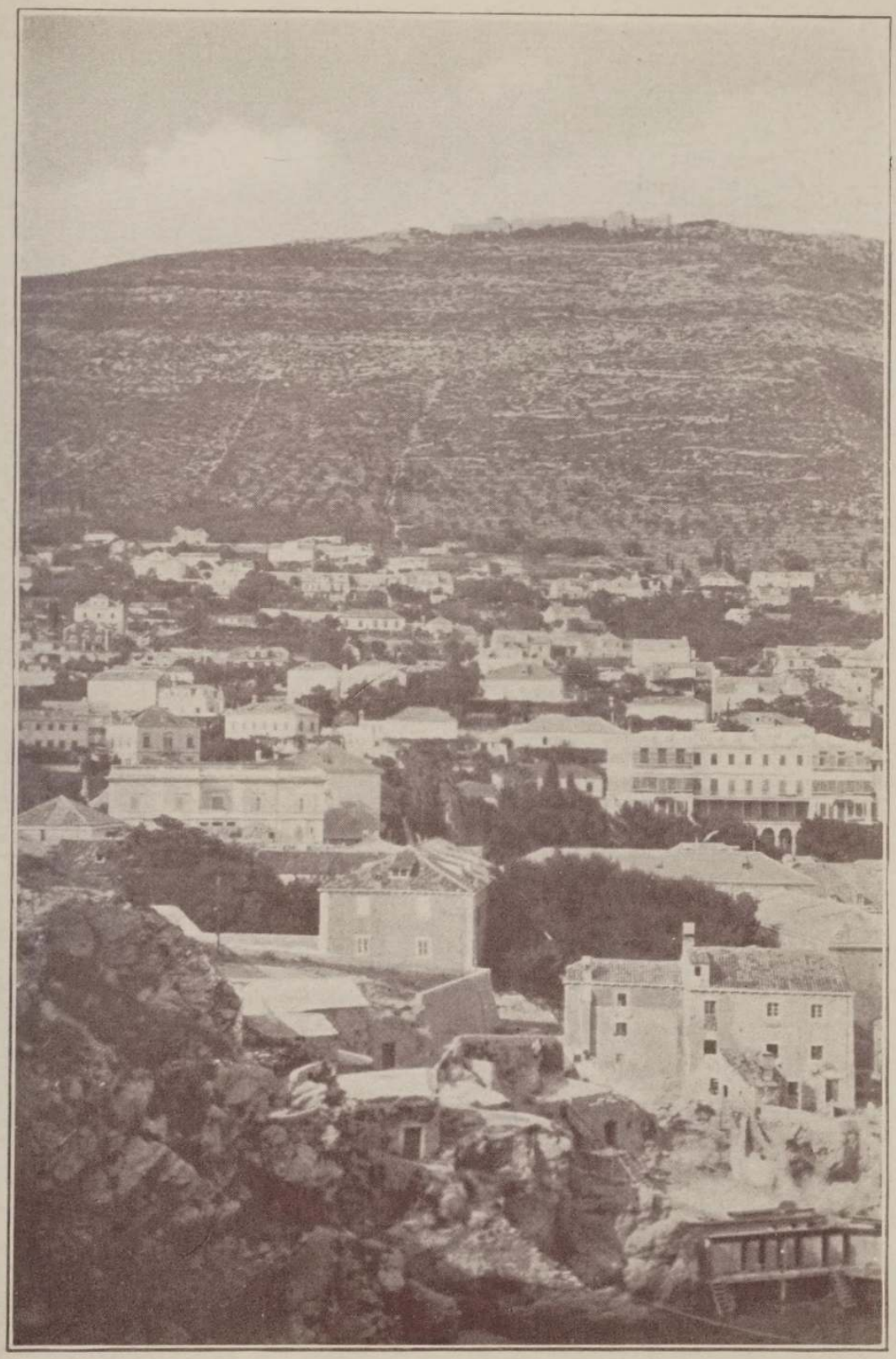
It was a beautiful day early in June when they started. Many relatives and neighbors had come over to wish them luck. Some of them had never themselves been more than a dozen miles from home.

"S bogom" (God be with you), and *"Do vidjenja"* (until we meet again), they shouted after them.

The way was through forests and valleys rich in snowdrops, violets, and other flowers, until they crossed the boundary into Dalmatia, the narrow state bordering the Adriatic Sea.

Here for a long way the country was a mass of hills, many of them a gray lava, which at times glistened in the sunlight like silver.

"Why, mother," said Milosh, disappointed; "there's nothing here but sagebrush and rocks, and rocks and sagebrush."



"THE CITY, UNDER THE BARE LIMESTONE MASS OF MT. SERGIO, LAY BEFORE THEM."

"Wait!" said his mother, smiling. "You'll soon see something different."

And sure enough, before many hours they were in the midst of more green vegetation and more bright flowers than the boy had even seen before. Instead of gray lava, the hillsides were now covered with vines and trees and shrubs. There were locusts, flowering aloes, giant plane trees, oleanders with pink and white blossoms, magnolias.

It was already the second morning of their journey when they reached this section, and they still had a long way to go to the home of Uncle Josip Glubitich, for he lived in the ancient city of Ragusa, or rather Dubrovnik, as the Serbian-speaking people call it.

But at sunset, the city, under the bare limestone mass of Mt. Sergio, lay before them. Its towers and mediæval walls, jutting out into the Adriatic Sea, were bathed in the rosy brightness of a magnificent sky.

Milosh uttered an exclamation of delight. This view exceeded even his expectations of the beauty of the place fostered by his mother, who missing its charm in her newer Croatian home, often talked to him of it as a city of romance and enchanting history.

How happy the mother, or *majka,* as the

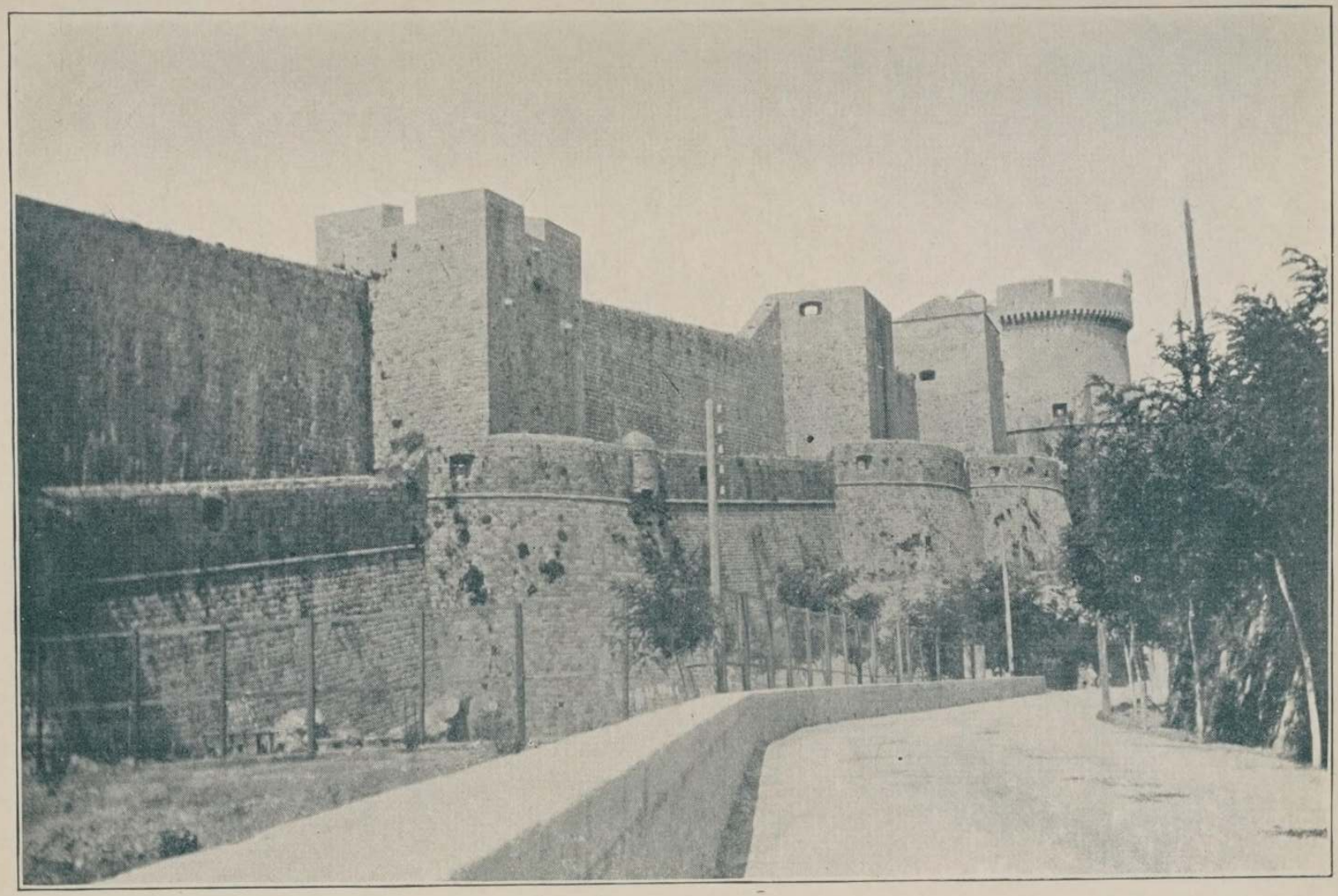
children called her, looked! She was so full of smiles and gay remarks that Milosh could not help taking hold of her hand and patting it, while Zorka cuddled up close to her.

"Dubrovnik never was conquered," she told the children. "But that is not the finest thing in its history. The finest thing is the fact that at one time it offered a sanctuary to refugees of all nations, even to those who had been its worst enemies." And oh, how proudly she looked when she said this!

"Our teacher once called it the 'Slavonic Athens.' Why was that?" Milosh questioned.

The mother thought a moment. "I think it must be," she said, "because there was a great and early development here of Jugoslav art and literature."

They were entering one of the gates of the city, with frowning bastions and a mediæval watch tower. Many people were going through on foot at the time. Some of the men had on red caps, others wore fezzes; some had vests embroidered in gold, short red jackets and full blue trousers. A young woman, carrying a basket, had a short, full, finely pleated skirt edged with intricate embroidery, a bright kerchief tied behind on her head, thick white



"ONE OF THE GATES . . . WITH FROWNING BASTIONS AND A MEDIÆVAL WATCH-TOWER."

stockings, and low shoes, evidently home-made.

It would be impossible to describe all the varied costumes they saw, for people, came to Dubrovnik not only from all the neighboring villages, but also from other Serbian-speaking States. There were very tall and stalwart Herzegovinians on the street, noble looking men from Montenegro, a more delicate type from Slavonia, and Mohammedan Slavs from Bosnia. It came to be one of Milosh's pastimes during his stay in the beautiful city, to try to distinguish these different peoples, all of whom spoke his own language.

They passed along the wide handsome main street, where the shops are very fine, with their filigree gold and silver ornaments, their oriental ware, gay carpets and embroideries, and other things.

Parallel to the main street is the Prijeki, a long and very narrow street with tall houses on each side. It was in one of these, one with on overhanging balcony, that *majka's* brother lived.

"Welcome, welcome, dear ones!" called out Josip Glubitich, as soon as they arrived. "We've been looking for you." And he spread out his arms to embrace as many as possible.

Soon every one felt at home, while *majka*

went right into the kitchen to help in the preparation of supper.

What a fine supper it was! There was *kisela chorba,* a chicken soup with lemon juice; *guivetch,* which is stewed lamb with potatoes, rice, tomatoes, and onions; a delicious bread shortened with pure olive oil; home-made plum jam; and coffee with whipped cream.

The wedding was a splendid affair; and when it was over, Milosh's uncle would not let them depart without seeing some of the most noted sights of the old picturesque city.

First there were the two fine convents dating back to the fourteenth century, each at one of the two gates leading into Dubrovnik,—and a much older church which was considered very old even in the 13th century.

"Whenever people were sick, they came to the monks to be cured," a Brother in one of the convents told them; "and these," pointing out some precious vases, "held the herbs and simples on which the monks largely relied. Museums have offered us big sums for them, but we won't give them up, for they remind us of some of the good things done here in times long gone by."

This was rather interesting to the children, but not nearly so much so as the cloisters, for

there each pillar had a capital carved to represent a very strange beast. Zorka thought them funny, but her brother would have liked to linger to puzzle out what each could be.

The Rector's palace, "a poem in stone" some one has called it, was next visited, and then a lovely fountain where Milosh and Zorka enjoyed feeding the pigeons, and watching Ragusan women fill their drinking vessels.

The next day they went on an excursion to the old domain of Count Gozze, at Cannosa, for Uncle Josip wanted them to see some giant plane trees whose age no one seemed to know.

"They make me feel as if I were only two feet tall!" exclaimed Milosh, as they were having refreshments under the largest tree, whose trunk, where it comes up from the ground, measures twenty-five paces around, and whose big branches spread out in all directions.

There were other beautiful trees on the estate, of which the orange and magnolia were in bloom, and there were hedges of flowering cactus, about which bees and butterflies hovered, while below the height on which the villa stands, could be heard the ceaseless murmuring of the sea.

Watching a fishing craft in the distance,

Milosh remarked: "My, I wish I was out in a boat like that, seeing what I could catch!"

He did not know how promptly his wish was to be granted.

CHAPTER VIII

THE ADRIATIC

AMONG the frequent guests at the home of Josip Glubitich, was Andrija Yankovich, the wealthy retired owner of a number of fishing vessels. He wanted to help entertain his friend's relatives, and, guessing Milosh's desire, invited the boy to take a trip on the Adriatic Sea with him.

"The Italians think they own this sea," he remarked, "but we've got some rights there too."

"It's a great honor," his mother told Milosh, as she gave her consent. "You must try to learn all you can, so that the Captain will be pleased with you."

Early next morning they started, going first to the south, where the deepest water is found. The clear blue-green sea was very calm. It moved only enough for its waves to dash lightly against the shore.

As they sailed around, Captain Yankovich related stories of the terrible northeast wind,

called the *bora,* and of sudden squalls that occur in winter and make navigation very dangerous.

"It was here," he said in his deep full voice, that made Milosh think of the ocean, "that an English king, called Richard of the Lion Heart, was once shipwrecked. He had come victorious from the Holy Land, but although he had conquered the Moslems he could not conquer the wind and storm. He was saved, but many of his soldiers and crew were drowned."

As the Captain enlarged thus on the dangers of the *bora,* they turned and made their way among the many long, narrow islands, to the Bocche di Cattaro (Kotor), where high mountains descend directly into the water. The waves beat so furiously at the entrance to this winding, magnificent inlet, that Milosh could not help remarking:

"They don't want us to enter, do they?"

But they did enter, passing through five gulfs joined by narrower channels, with interesting towns on the shores. At one of these, a group of peasants who had come down from the mountains with their loaded donkeys waved at them. They looked very odd; for some of the men were twice as big as the animals on

which they were seated, and their feet almost dragged on the ground. It was no wonder that one donkey after another opened his mouth to complain.

They soon left this scene far behind, and finally their boat came into one of the finest natural harbors in all Europe.

"Now here I'm going to let you do something you'll love," said the Captain. "I'm going to let you go on a real fishing trip."

Milosh jumped into the air and gave a shout. "Oh, how good you are!" he exclaimed. "But what'll mother say if we don't get back tonight?"

"That'll be all right," returned his kindly guide. "I whispered the possibility into your father's ear as we left, and he'll explain."

So they wandered among the wharves until late afternoon, when a boat owned by the Captain, with excited Milosh aboard, set out,—for the fishing had to be done at night.

The fishermen proved pleasant companions. They told Milosh much regarding the sardine. It would soon be time for them to spawn, they said, when they would migrate toward the land, but stop some distance from shore. The men sang and joked, too, until they came to their fishing station, where they anchored, and all

became quiet. A lamp was now fixed to the side of the boat.

"The light will bring sardines to the surface," one of the fishermen told the boy, "and then we can get them."

And oh, how many they had to show when they returned!

"You brought us good luck," grinned one of the men, as Milosh pointed out the glistening fish to the Captain, who seemed to have known just when they would return, and was waiting for them. "Come with us again."

"I know lots about the sardine," Milosh confided to Captain Yankovich, anxious that he should see that he had profited by the treat. "They haven't any teeth, and they're about seven and a half inches long when they're full grown, at least that's the size of those near here, and their eggs are buoyant, and there are, oh, so many other kinds of fish in the Adriatic Sea!"

CHAPTER IX

THE LAND OF THE BLACK MOUNTAIN

MILOSH'S father, mother and sister left for home on the day when he returned from his fishing trip, but great things were happening for the boy himself. It was all because of an idea that came into the head of Bogdan Sissivich, a relative from Montenegro.

"When one has a chance to see distant lands," Bogdan said to Milosh's father, while the boy was away, "he ought to take advantage of it. Now this is Milosh's first trip from home, and it is also the first trip of Churo, my brother. Now I love Churo and would like him to know something about the world. He is older and stronger than your son. Let him take Milosh's place in your home for a while, and let Milosh take his place in our home, and they'll both be wiser and better for it."

Milosh's mother at first shook her head; but when the father, who was ambitious for his son, after thinking it over decided that it

would be selfish for them not to accept this offer, she, too, gave her consent.

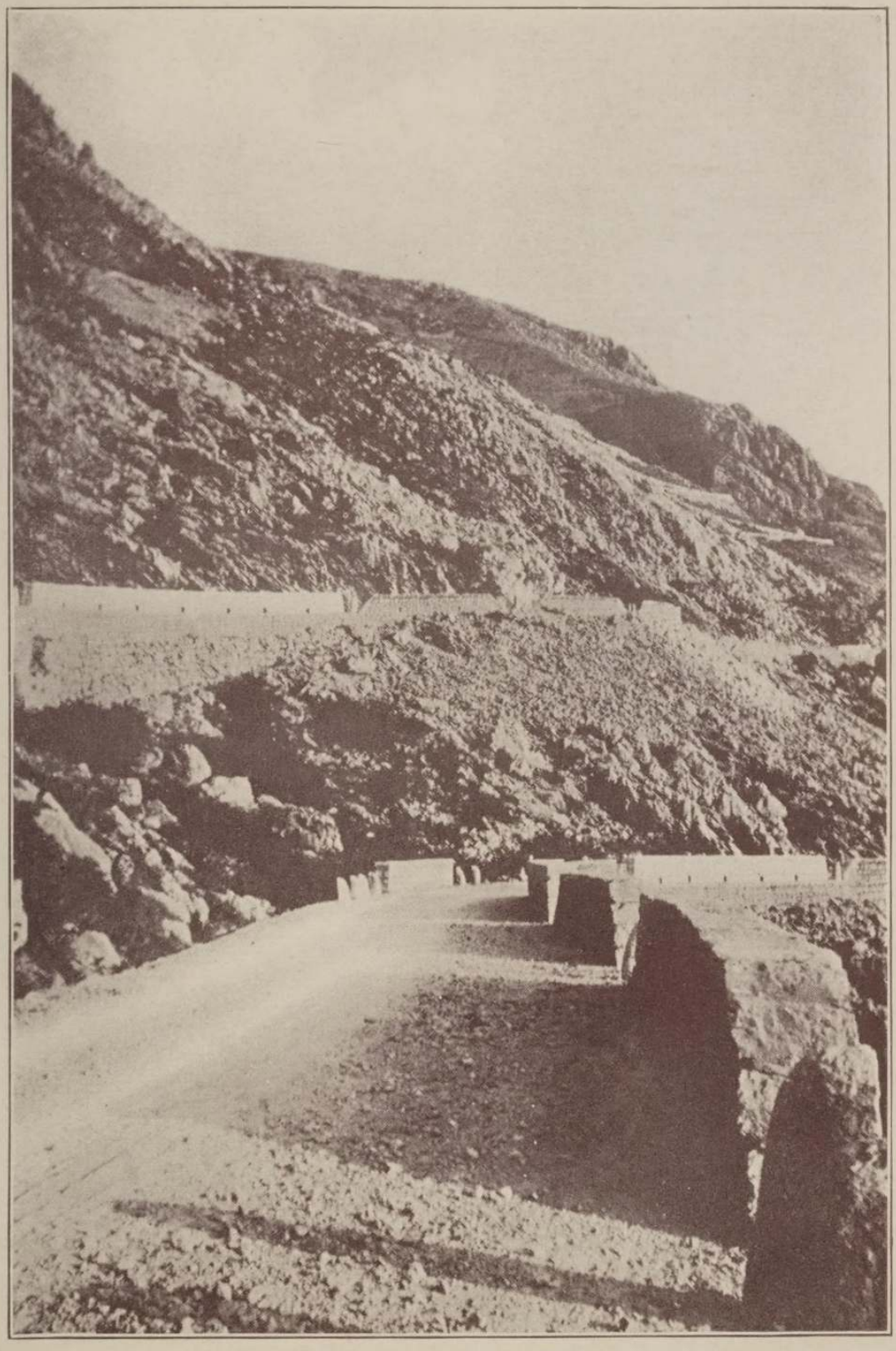
"I know Bogdan's people," the father said to her. "They're fine, honest folks, and Milosh will learn only what is good while with them." So when Milosh returned, the new and bigger surprise greeted him.

Both he and his mother cried when they parted, and so did little Zorka, but on the whole he was glad to go with Bogdan Sissivich, whom he admired greatly.

Bogdan was six feet, six inches tall, and strong in proportion. He had regular features, a curly brown mustache, and thick, dark brown hair. His bearing and manners were those of a prince.

He wore the Montenegrin costume: full trousers of dark blue cloth reaching only to the knees, close fitting leggings, and pointed *opankas*. Under his white homespun coat was a crimson waistcoat, heavily embroidered in black and gold, while around his waist was a scarf twisted so as to hold his weapons, though he did not wear them in Dalmatia. In winter he wore over all either a long scarf or a graceful cape.

They left next morning, after thanking the Glubitiches warmly for their kind hospitality.



A SECTION OF THE ROAD ACROSS THE MOUNTAINS.

Their way lay on a zigzag ascending road cut out of the mountain rock.

This road is a marvelous piece of engineering. When it was started people doubted if it could ever be finished. Even to cut a foot-path in the rock was them considered impossible. It took years of blasting to make, and many persons engaged in the work lost their lives. But through it Montenegro was connected with the outside world, which many of her people, at the time, thought a doubtful blessing.

This road leads to Mt. Lovchen, where, Bogdan told Milosh, the renowned ruler of Montenegro, Peter II, poet and last of the Bishop-Princes of his country, lies buried. He himself chose this last abiding place, for he said he would wish his spirit to be where it could always see his beloved native land.

"Why is your country called Crnagora (the Black Mountain)?" asked Milosh.

"Because it often looks black," was Bogdan's reply; "especially in summer, when the clouds hovering above the mountains cast their great shadows."

Up up, the two travelers ascended, until they reached a plateau where they stopped to rest. Here the view of the wild mountain

ranges, one behind another, was magnificent; while, in the distance, the Lake of Scutari could be seen.

As they proceeded on their way, Bogdan told Milosh much about Montenegro and its people: how the latter are said to be descended from Serbian nobles who found refuge from the Turks in its rocky fastnesses; how these had preferred the hard life there to paying tribute to those they considered enemies; and how the Montenegrins, alone of all the Balkan peoples, had never paid this tribute.

"We were thought unconquerable," he said, sadly, "and, personally knowing no fear, we also thought ourselves so, until this terrible World War proved that we could not withstand the diabolic modern inventions of man, which do not give personal bravery a proper chance. Besides—" and here his look darkened and he became silent.

When he again spoke he had gone back to the more distant past.

"Yes, we were long unconquerable. Even Napoleon found that out. He thought he could subdue us easily. He railed at us: 'You call yourself Black Mountain, do you? Well, I'll change you to a Red Mountain,—red

with the blood of your people.' But, my God!" Bogdan used this favorite Montenegrin exclamation often. "Did he? No! He was glad later to seek us for allies!"

"Were you in the Balkan Wars?" asked Milosh.

"Yes," replied Bogdan, "both against Turkey and against Bulgaria. My elder brother was killed in the Battle of Bardagnolt, of which some one said that if it had been fought by one of the Great Powers it would have been blazoned forever on their banners. Something went wrong with our supplies, and for three days most of us had not tasted food. When, after the battle, my mother came seeking us, I was so weak that had she not brought wine I could not have helped her. We found my brother frightfully wounded, but still breathing. As my mother held his head against her breast, she comforted him:

" 'You are leaving, my son, but go in gladness since Montenegro has won.' He caught the words. A happy look came into his eyes, and he repeated for the last time: 'Montenegro!' "

Both were silent for a time, and then Bogdan began to talk of other things. He touched on some superstitions in which,

strangely enough, he himself seemed to have a certain faith.

"Once," he said, "a stranger killed a black snake near our house. We all believe that such snakes live under every house, and that if one is killed, the head of the house to which it belongs is sure to die. We had hardly the heart to tell father, but when we did, he was calm, and only said: *'Nema smrti bez soodyena dana.* (There is no death before the day appointed).' "

"Did he die?" Milosh inquired.

"No," returned Bogdan. "The snake could not have been our snake."

"There is one snake that I'd like to see," Bogdan continued, after a pause. "It's the water-dragon that makes its home in the Lake of Rikavatz. Nobody will live near this place on account of him. He is said to have a fiery head, and when he comes out of the water or goes back, the thunder roars and lightning flashes. Of course," he added, "our late King said it isn't true. But some say the snake deceived the King by taking on the form of a handsome prince. I don't know."

As Bogdan thus talked and Milosh listened, they continued onward, seldom resting. They met few people, but saw here and there in tiny

valleys, which are sometimes only a few feet square, men, and more often women busying themselves with crops that they had planted.

At sunset they reached a tiny settlement, where they secured lodging at the home of one of Bogdan's friends, Grgo Milicich.

"Take good heed of Grgo," Bogdan advised his young companion, before entering the house; "for, Milosh, you're going to see one of our old type heroes, and you may never see such another in all your life. I will ask him to tell you some of his experiences,—and see that you note all he says."

CHAPTER X

GRGO AND HIS STORY

GRGO met them at the door. He was a man about eighty, almost as tall as Bogdan, broad shouldered, too, with a form still straight and pliable, but so thin that his open shirt revealed every bone in his sinewy neck and chest. His wrinkled face had been dyed a deep brown by the sun and wind. His eyes, black and piercing, were shaded by brows and long lashes that had become as grizzled as his hair, but his long mustaches, reaching to his hairy breast, had remained black. A deep scar stood out an angry red over his left eye. One arm was wholly missing.

He was dressed poorly. His feet were shod in torn *opankas,* his dark blue trousers were stained, his shirt was of coarse material, —but within his broad red belt glittered a magnificent revolver and the handle of a long handzar, fully half the length of a man; while on a golden chain swung a short Turkish sword.

Bogdan saluted him with:

"God greet you! I see you're still wearing your jewels, grandfather Grgo."

"They're my only comfort," returned the old man, clasping Bogdan warmly by the hand, and smiling down at Milosh, who, for his part, could not take his eyes from him.

"We have come to beg your honorable hospitality for the night," said Bogdan.

"The house is God's and yours," replied Grgo warmly. "We shall find you something to eat, too, and even if it be only a potato apiece, it will be blessed by our love and goodwill."

"We keep up this old custom here," he continued as they entered, pointing out a plate of bread with salt beside it on the rude table.

Bogdan and Milosh seated themselves, and all partook of this; for not to have done so would not only have been the greatest of discourtesies to their host, but would in his opinion have proclaimed them enemies of the household.

Besides the handmade table and benches, there was an open fire in the room, with an old funnel arrangement above it to carry off the smoke. The floor was of beaten earth. In one corner was an *ikon,* or picture of a saint,

before which a small lamp was burning. Opposite this was a rudely framed paper on which an Englishmen, who had met and admired Grgo, had printed some of Tennyson's inspiring lines to Montenegro:

O smallest among peoples! rough rock-throne
Of Freedom! warriors beating back the swarm
Of Turkish Islam for five hundred years;
Great Tsernogora! never since thine own
Black ridges drew the cloud and brake the storm,
Has breathed a race of mightier mountaineers.

Grgo was particularly proud of this, and seeing his guests look at it, explained what it was about.

A girl of about fourteen entered and kissed the hands of the guests. Grgo spoke of her as his grand-daughter, Danica, explaining that she alone of all his household was left to him.

Danica, like many Montenegrin girls, was very beautiful. The fair skin of her oval face was rosy, her solemn brown eyes glowed like black pearls, while her wavy dark hair formed a mass of plaits arranged like a coronet on top of her head. Everything she had on was patched, but very clean. Her feet were bare.

She began to set the table with what poor food they had,—consisting of a bean and

onion soup, coarse bread, sheep cheese, a little honey, and goat milk. Very little was said until supper was at an end, when Bogdan turned the conversation deftly to Grgo's own experiences.

GRGO'S STORY

"I was born near the Albanian border, where my father owned a big sheep ranch. Everybody in our village had suffered at various times from the Turk. We all went armed. When I was thirteen, my father presented me with a brace of pistols, and with these I felt that I was fully a man. My father's family had been subjected to particular persecution, for they were very open in expressing their contempt for the Moslems, our age-long enemies. 'He who spares the guilty, wrongs the innocent,' was one of our favorite mottoes.

"I was a hot-headed youngster, and thought that I would show the rascals the stuff of which Montenegrins are made. This thought took such possession of me that often, in planning what I should do, I lay awake all night. I had yet to learn how little can be accomplished by one alone, or even by groups of individuals.

"I was but a few years older when two com-

rades and myself made a solemn vow that we would become *heyduks,* who as you know, are men who give up their lives to guerilla warfare on the Turks. To this end we adopted one another, according to our custom, as brothers, or *pobratim,* going before our priest and kneeling at the altar for this sacred ceremony. This new relationship, of course, meant that we would be true unto death to one another.

"The very next day, attracting what companions we could, we took to the woods. By the end of the month there were sixteen of us under the leadership of Joso Tomasevich, my older *pobratim.* We made sallies on our enemies whenever they were about, and although there were so few of us, we were so daring and so determined to avenge our wrongs, that we came to be really feared.

"After we had led this life for eight or nine months, Tomasevich was killed, and I was chosen leader in his stead. It would take too long to tell you my life. Four of us once seized a cannon directed against a village, and pulled it up into the steep mountains, while the Turkish soldiers fired at us. They were afraid to follow, for they had learned, to their cost, that a few brave men can hold a moun-

tain pass against many hundreds. But that little expedition's only one thing.

"Hard as the life was, I had my reward, for I was welcome among Serbian speaking people wherever found. Sometimes, hidden, I heard the countryfolk sing songs celebrating me and my deeds and those of the brave fellows with me; often, while in disguise, I would find the boys in the villages playing they were Grgo and his *heyduk* band: and so I knew that everywhere people were grateful to us for what we were trying to do.

"Later I took part in the Balkan Wars and still later in the World War, where, alas, Montenegro lost her independence, and is now only a part of Greater Serbia. Perhaps this union of one race was necessary and bound to come, but for me, who believed that Montenegrin ideals could only be preserved by her remaining by herself, it is hard."

With unshed tears in his eyes, the old man gazed into the fire.

CHAPTER XI

A SERBIAN'S PART IN THE WORLD WAR

THE next morning Bogdan and Milosh were again on their way. They had not proceeded far when they were overtaken by a Serbian from Belgrade. He was darker than Milosh and his companion, and with the look of one who had suffered greatly in his large, expressive, brown eyes.

"Since the close of the War in which we were so shamelessly attacked, I have been wandering about in Croatia, Dalmatia, Slavonia, Bosnia, Herzegovina, and in my own Serbia, as well as here in Montenegro,—that is, in every part of our Jugoslavia," he explained. "I seem unable to settle down. You see, I no longer have a home," he ended pathetically.

"You lost everything, then?" inquired Bogdan kindly.

The Serbian nodded. It was some time before he could speak. But after the three had tramped on for some fifteen minutes, he broke the silence:

"When, enfeebled by disease as well as war, Serbia was besieged by her powerful and united enemies, only one course was left to her, as you know, and that was retreat. When the army decided that we must make our way to the sea over the terrible Albanian Mountains, old men, women, and children, seized with panic, followed us, and among these last were my two married sisters,—one with a babe in her arms,—and a younger sister. My eight year old brother, Rada, had been very sick; so frightened though my mother was, she decided she would run the risk of remaining in Belgrade with him. We never saw either again.

"We had not gone very far when snow began to fall, which changed later to an icy blizzard. The soldiers had little food, and some of that we shared with those dear to us who were following. We forded freezing rivers while famishing. Our shoes wore out and there were none to replace them: our feet left marks of blood on the white snow. We slept as we best could, with our scanty blankets, in the open, for we had neither time nor strength to put up even rude shelters.

"Day after day, suffering and starvation claimed many of our band. My sister's child

was the first of my family to go. Its mother went soon after. When I shared my very meager soldier's allowance with my two remaining sisters, I could hardly bear to see them, so pitifully wasted did they look.

"At last we arrived at Durazzo, from where we were taken to the Island of Corfu and cared for by the allies. But of the first 4,000 men of the army taken over, 900 died of exhaustion the first night alone.

"The suffering which she had endured was more than my older sister could stand. Her life forces could not regain their old vitality, and at the end of the fifth day after reaching the refuge, she died. Dobrilla, my dear younger sister, did recover, and as soon as it was possible, offered herself as a nurse, and left for home. While in a hospital camp she contracted typhus fever, which was raging everywhere in the country, and her weakened system made it impossible for her to withstand the attack.

"We had lost my father in the second Balkan War, when we had to fight Bulgaria. So, of a family of seven, I alone now remain."

As they neared Cettinje, the tiny Capital of the tiny Montenegrin State, their new acquaintance, who had endeared himself to them be-

THE MAIN STREET OF THE TINY CAPITAL, CETTINJE.

cause of all he had undergone, urged Bogdan and Milosh to spend the night with his *pobratim,* who he was sure would give them a warm welcome. But Bogdan felt they must hurry on.

They had hardly parted from the Serbian, however, when they were attracted by a crowd that was gathering on the principal street. Interested in finding out what was going on, they pushed their way through. They found that the excitement was due to an old blind *guslar,* or minstrel, led by his grandchild, who was being urged to play and sing.

CHAPTER XII

THE GUSLAR

GUSLARS, generally blind like the one Bogdan and Milosh now saw, are still often met with in Serbia and Montenegro. They are not unlike the ancient bards of Homer's time, or the minstrels of which Sir Walter Scott has written.

The long white beard of the *guslar* reached almost to his waist as he seated himself on a rock. Resting his gusle, a mandolin shaped musical instrument with one string, against his knee, he drew a curved bow a few times slowly across it, making it give forth a monotonous, droning sound. Then he began to chant:

"The Yellow Moon took the Morning Star to task because she had remained so long out of his sight, but she excused herself by telling him the wonders she had seen."

Then with growing passion he told the glorious deeds of a *heyduk,* who, sorrowing that his people had been despoiled by the

LISTENING TO A BLIND *GUSLAR*.

Turks, had taken to the woods, like a modern Robin Hood, to have his revenge; how followers had gathered about him; how he did no wrong, but only seized what had first been wickedly taken; and, finally, how he had made friends with a Turkish foe, not less brave and noble than himself, who had consented to a personal encounter.

The Contest

"Osman Beg leaped lightly from his horse and threw the bridle to some of his men. He was a splendid looking man, tall and slender and graceful. His eyes, black as night, framed by thick, velvety, and even blacker brows, looked at the world unafraid. He was dressed in his Turkish uniform, on which the gold buttons and gold braid of the black coat glittered from afar. He wore his red fez, with its rich long blue tassel, slightly to one side.

"Osman Beg was respected by every Montenegrin not only for the bravery which he had repeatedly shown, but also for his justice. He took from the villagers, it is true, but unlike many others, only that which the law allowed.

"Peko Filipov, the *heyduk,* was splendidly attired in the fine costume of our Montenegrin land. It, too, shone with its gold embroidery. He was six feet three in height, and so strong that he could lift an ox without effort. The fame of Peko Filipov had reached from one boundary of the country to the other. Stories without end were told of his daring, and every *guslar* was proud to sing of his deeds.

"Now when the two met it was something never to be forgotten.

"They stood opposite each other,—a splendid pair each with his right foot forward. Osman looked serious, but Peko was smiling. Peko placed his *handzar* and pistol to one side; Osman did the same. Such quiet reigned that the followers of each, gathered around, could hear the beating of their own hearts.

"The two now measured each other. Peko, still smiling, placed one hand on his hip and raised the other toward Osman. Carelessly did he do this. It was as if he were merely stretching lazily, but, ah, to those closely watching it was seen how on the alert he really was as to what Osman's move would be.

"Very different was Osman's attitude. His eyes flashed; his body quivered with impatience. Quickly, strongly his hand met Peko's. Then

those two fists alone struggled for supremacy.

"Eight, nine, ten, twelve minutes did this last,—and not one inch was either able to make the other budge.

"Then suddenly Osman withdrew the pressure of his arm. Peko, prepared, did not lose his balance, but merely stepped lightly to one side. Hardly had they touched hands again, when Peko withdrew his, but Osman stood as firmly as before. Peko raised his fist again as if to meet Osman's, but instead he swiftly embraced him. Osman, ready, returned the embrace with interest.

"Now began a wrestling match such as few present had ever before seen. Up and down the road they struggled, so closely clasped that you might have thought their two bodies were but one. Blood mounted to their cheeks; perspiration ran in streams from their faces; their deep breathing was heard to the outer edge of the watching throng.

"The minutes flew. An hour passed; then part of another. The spectators held their breaths as neither gained.

"Then a little pet dog belonging to Osman Beg, somehow forced itself through the crowd and ran to its master.

"The Turk saw him, and fearing to hurt

him, relaxed his hold, oh! so slightly, as he gave the animal a gentle kick aside. But that tiny lessened resistance was all that Peko needed. With a sudden wrench free, he raised Osman up and flung him to the ground.

"Now Peko had not seen the dog, and when he heard in the midst of the loud acclaims, some say: 'It was the dog!' he asked his good friend, Josip, who had come up, to tell him what they meant. And when Josip explained, Peko extended his hand to Osman, who with some difficulty had arisen, and said:

" 'I cannot call that a victory. The match was a tie.'

"The blood was running from a wound that Osman had received on his head as he fell, and as some of his followers bound it, he insisted:

" 'Not so! The victory is yours, and fairly won.'

"Then Peko became angry.

" 'Did you not hear the people?' he cried. 'I tell you I will not have such a victory!'

" 'Let us settle it then with our swords,' proposed Osman.

" 'So be it,' agreed Peko.

"They placed themselves in position. A moment after their swords had crossed. But here again the two heroes proved equal one to

the other. Until set of sun did the contest last. Their strength was fast ebbing when Peko cried:

" 'Let us once more call it a tie, O brave Osman.'

"And Osman answered: 'It is well, thou brave Montenegrin.'

"Osman Beg looked ghastly as he spoke, with the blood thick upon his face, for the bandage had fallen from his forehead. Peko was breathing hard and on his arm was a red gash. But they met each other's eyes fearlessly.

"Then together both sheathed their swords, and as they did so, approached, without the words they could not utter, and kissed each other on the cheeks.

" 'You will always be dear to me, O Turk, my now adopted brother, whom I once thought I hated,' Peko at last found it possible to say.

" 'And you, O brother, to me,' returned Osman, clasping Peko's hands.

"And this was the beginning of a rare friendship, which lasted throughout the lives of Osman Beg, a Turkish hero, and our Peko Filipov, his former Montenegrin enemy."

CHAPTER XIII

ZORKA'S ADVENTURE

WHILE Milosh was having these and many other new experiences in Montenegro, things were going on much as they had always gone on in his Croatian home, where Churo was taking his place.

Summer with its excessive heat gave way to autumn, when every one in the rural sections of Croatia was looking forward to the time when the grain would be cut.

Late one bright afternoon in the beginning of September, Zorka's mother took her to the fields, from which she intended bringing home one of the pumpkins which grew big and round among the corn. She left her little daughter sitting on a great yellow one while she went some distance further on to where she had noted, a few days previous, that their watermelons also were ripening.

Zorka sat still as long as she could see her mother's dress in between the grain, then she slid down from her seat and looked around.

A bright colored butterfly flew past, and she stretched out her chubby hands, calling: "Come, come to Zorka."

It paid no heed but went on and on over the ripened grain. Zorka liked it; it was so pretty. She wanted to catch it and love it. So she followed where it flew.

Further and further it took her; often fluttering near, but never quite within her reach.

At last it lit, and as Zorka hurried toward it, she stumbled and fell into a furrow, while the gay butterfly flew away out of sight.

Zorka raised herself and sat still for several minutes. Where was she? She seemed to be far away in a new country. Everywhere was corn, corn, corn. She called in her soft baby voice, *"Majka,"* but no one answered.

It was very quiet, and the little girl was beginning to feel sleepy when an odd rustling, crunching sound made itself heard near her. Zorka peered through the stalks but could see nothing. Then came a louder sound, and so nearly back of her that she gave a frightened turn, but still could see nothing.

Suddenly there was a bound and a poor little hare, as frightened as herself, crouched trembling before her. Then with another bound it was out of sight, while Zorka began

softly to cry, and call *majka* again; but the rustle of the corn in the wind completely drowned her tiny voice.

After a time, tired out with the long walk and her fear, she cuddled down close to a big corn-stalk and fell asleep.

In the meantime her mother had returned with a nice melon, and not finding Zorka anywhere near, concluded that she had probably wandered home. But when she reached the house there was no Zorka there, and neither Draga, the little girl next door, nor her grandmother, had seen anything of her.

Now anxious, the mother hurried back to the field and sought everywhere in the direction opposite to that she herself had taken, but in vain.

She could not have the help of Zorka's father, for he was away on a three day trip to the neighboring sister state of Slavonia, where he intended purchasing two of the fine hardy horses which are raised there. She longed for Churo, who was herding as usual, to come. But the sun had already set when he joined her, for it was not until he returned with the pigs that he learned from the neighbors that Zorka was lost. Several men and women came with him to assist in the search.

ZORKA'S MOTHER.

The mother was crying. "Don't be alarmed," Churo said to her, looking very handsome and self-reliant. "You sit down now and rest. I'll find my cousin."

And although all started at once to search, it was really Churo who found her under the corn-stalks, where she was still sleeping peacefully. He gave a shout which was heard all over the field. Lifting the little girl,—who opened her eyes for a moment, and then seeing that it was her beloved cousin, closed them again,—he carried her to where all were gathered around the mother.

Majka gave Churo such a grateful, loving look that he felt overpaid a thousand times. Then clasping Zorka, who was awake and gazing wonderingly around, close to herself, she gave her a gentle slap.

"Naughty child!" she said, her voice quivering with relief. "You mustn't go off by yourself like that again; will you remember?"

CHAPTER XIV

VISITORS FROM SLAVONIA

ZORKA'S father returned a day or two after his little daughter's "big" adventure, and of course had to listen to long, detailed accounts of it. He did not come alone, but accompanied by two Slovenes,—a young married couple who were on their way to some relatives in Bosnia, —whom he had invited so cordially to stay over a day with his family, that they had consented to do so.

They proved to be very pleasant guests. The man had a bronzed complexion, light-gray, melancholy looking eyes, a hooked nose, and long blond hair. His wife was not unlike him in appearance, but with a rounder face and a less serious expression. As such a journey was an event in their lives, they were wearing their holiday clothes. The man's white linen home-spun shirt, embroidered at the seams, was open at the throat. Over it was a little waistcoat with many silver buttons. His wide trousers were of blue cloth, fitting closely below the

knee. Although he did not have it on, he had with him a big coat of uncut sheepskin. The wide belt, which now encircled his waist, went outside the coat when worn, and was capable of holding many things. As his special ornament he wore silver earrings.

His wife's costume consisted of a white, embroidered chemise with wide sleeves, a skirt of white linen, a scarlet apron, and bright knitted stockings. A white kerchief was knotted becomingly on her head. Her special decoration was a lovely blue bone-bead necklace, which looked as if it might be an heirloom. Both wore pliable shoes of undressed leather, evidently home made, the man's being bound at the top by dried sheep thongs.

The Slovene language which they used was a different dialect from the Serbian spoken in Croatia, but they had little difficulty in making themselves understood or in understanding their new friends.

The young couple had with them a large photograph which they were taking to their relatives. It showed the courtyard of the Slovene inn owned by the bride's father. One of the chief things in this courtyard was a pump with a big wooden wheel, near which waddled some ducks. Not far from this were

two servants roasting a small pig over an open fire. The picture was much examined and admired.

In the evening many of the villagers came in to greet the Slovenes and to hear from them all they could about this part of Jugoslavia. The man was a good talker. He had recently been in Ljubljana (Laibach), the beautiful Slovene city of the section called Carniola, and had much to tell them of the charming valley in which it is found.

"Is there much manufacturing there?" one man asked.

"Oh, yes," the Slovene answered; "especially of pottery, bricks, linen and woolen goods, paper, fire-hose, and oil."

"All of that section of Jugoslavia," the schoolmaster, who was present, now gave as his contribution, "was particularly stimulated by the creation of the Illyrian Provinces by Napoleon. We have always considered our debt to him very great, because the creation of these provinces was the first modern attempt at a reunion of the Serbian speaking people—the Serbs, the Croats, and the Slovenes—in one state. For the first time after many centuries, the population recovered the free use of the national language in the schools and in public

life, and were able to apply democratic principles under a good administration. It awoke the different peoples to a realization that they were one."

"Why were the provinces called Illyria?" Churo asked.

"Illyria is the name that the ancient Greeks gave to lands bordering on the Adriatic, after the tribes who then lived there. The Roman word 'Illyricum' was used somewhat differently. For a time the word disappeared from history, but being preserved in literature it was easy to revive it."

"There is a picture of ancient times in Slavonia in our last Calendar given as a premium with a Ragusa newspaper," said the mother. "Churo will find it."

Churo quickly did so, and all bent over it with interest. It represented the installation of a Solvene ruler very many years ago. The Prince, clothed in rustic garments, was walking toward a peasant standing on a great rock, while many persons were gathered in the background. Under the illustration was written:

Peasant: Who is this who comes?
People: The Prince who would rule us.
Peasant: Is he a good judge?
People: He is.

Peasant: Is he the friend of truth?

People: He is.

Peasant: Then do I gladly give him my place so that he may swear to defend us from all enemies.

This led to a discussion of the difference between old and new ideals of government, after which some one sang a song, and the Slovene recited a patriotic poem by one of the great poets of his country,—Anton Ashkerc.

It was entitled "The Ferryman," and told of the brave sacrifice of his life made by an old fisherman to prevent Turkish spies reaching his people, who, considering their position safe, were unwatchful in their fortress.

It is night, and the Turks who approach the old man offer rich bribes if he will guide them across the dangerous Sava in his little skiff, that they may learn the position of their Slav enemy.

"Now silent are woodland and plain;
The Slavs in yon stronghold have lain,
Serene amid slumber abiding.
Enwrapped in the mantle of night,
We are sent to lay bare to our sight
Whereabouts here our foes are in hiding.

They tell the fisherman:
'Lo! glittering gold of the Turk
Shall richly requite thee thy work . . .
An thou wilt not,—thy head we will sunder!' "[1]

The old man refuses their gold, but agrees to take them across the river.

The Turks praise his boldness in guiding them amid the perils of the stream, and speak of the rich rewards that will accrue to themselves for this piece of work. But they do not know the extent of their ferryman's courage. Suddenly, in the heart of the rapids, the fisherman throws his oar far out on the waves, shouting:

"Make ready! . . .
For us both here the payment is tendered!"

A shriek, a wild swirl, and once more the night is still.

[1] Passages quoted are from the translation of P. Selver in "Anthology of Modern Slavonic Literature."

CHAPTER XV

AUTUMN AND WINTER IN CROATIA

THE Slovenes left next morning.

A few days later the cutting of the grain was begun, the neighbors helping one another, according to their fine custom, so that the village spirit of friendliness and brotherhood grew. There was much talking and joking and singing of songs during this work, so that it hardly seemed like work at all.

Everybody went to the fields; the babies and little ones playing together in the shade of the wagons, under the care of one of the older children. Churo, big strong boy that he was, did almost a man's share of work; but every once in a while he was given his moments of rest when he carried around some sort of drink that was much relished by the dusty and heated workers.

When the grain was harvested, the apples were gathered, some for market and some for the use of the family during the winter. Then all the boys were sent to the woods to bring in

the supply of fuel that would see them through the cold weather.

This came early and proved unusually severe. But there was plenty of amusement as well as enough indoor work, even with the thermometer below zero. Spinning, dyeing, weaving, sewing and embroidering were the never-ending occupations of the women. Some of this work was strangely beforehand according to our notions, as where Zorka's mother worked on things for the little three year old daughter's bridal trousseau.

Then men made their *opankas* or shoes, mended harness, fashioned and carved furniture, and did many other things for which they had no time during the busier seasons. Churo took considerable pleasure in making a frieze in the living-room of neatly lettered Serbian proverbs. Those which he chose were:

Who often asks about the road is not apt to lose his way.

Better an ounce of wisdom than a hundredweight of physical strength.

It is better not to begin than not to finish.

When a man is not good himself, he likes to talk of what is bad in other people.

Without health there is no wealth.

Every loss teaches men to be wiser.

Earnest work is never lost.

A mighty river owes its power to little brooks.

It is an easy matter to throw a stone into the Danube, but very difficult to get it out.

Whoever sings, cannot think badly.

Give me a friend who will weep with me: I can find those who will laugh with me myself.

Strike out new roads, but stick to your old friends.

My castle may be small but I am its governor.

It is better to suffer injustice than to commit it.

It is better to have a reputation of gold than a belt of gold.

As long as a man honors himself no man can dishonor him.

One of the events always looked forward to, was a spinning bee. This generally took place at the home of one of the unmarried women, where all the other girls of the village would be invited to come to help. It was sure to be a gay party, with much joking, guessing of riddles and story telling. Sometimes it was arranged that the young men should join the

women later in the evening. This meant especial merriment, in which the *kolo,* one of the national dances, was almost always a feature.

This dance seems very simple because there is nothing violent in its movements, but the steps are many and intricate, so that to be a good *kolo* dancer is something of a distinction. Churo especially, took to it, and young though he was, the girls were glad to have him join. Churo made his personality felt in other ways also. He was a sort of hero among the young people; not because of anything he had himself done, but perhaps because he had the Montenegrin royal air and because he had a gift for describing things in such a way as to appeal to his hearers' imaginations.

No one in the village—even among the grownups—could equal him in his story telling, and whenever he consented to relate a folk, or other tale, he became a center of attraction. The younger people never tired of hearing about Kralyevich Marko and his numerous adventures, and Churo told the many things he knew about him again and again.

Majka particularly liked him to recite a poem called, "Slavu Slavi Kralyevich Marko," which shows Marko's great veneration for his

mother, Yevrosima; in one case even endangering his own life by not carrying arms, rather than act contrary to one of her requests.

Majka also liked the boy to emphasize Yevrosima's advice to Marko when he was called on to decide to whom the Serbian crown rightly belonged:

"Let not thy rearing be accursed in thee, the son I bore,
For thy father or thy brethren speak not false, whate'er the stress,
But according to the living God speak out his righteousness;
Hurt not spirit, Marko, save thou the soul, my son,
Rather lose life than the soul should have a stain thereon."

"I have been to Prilip," one day a Serbian visitor who was listening, said. "The ruins of the castle where Marko lived five hundred years ago, overlook the town. Some friends showed me hoof prints on the rocks near it, which they told me were made by Sharatz, his wonderful steed. They also said that at midnight on his feast day Marko rides out, fully armed, on his piebald."

"Many people believe that he isn't dead, but only sleeping in a mountain cavern," some

one else put in. "At the Battle of Prilip, during the Balkan War, the Serbian soldiers were commanded not to attack the Turks until the effect of their artillery was noted. Suddenly, however, despite their officers, they rushed forward and crossed their bayonets with those of their enemy. Very shortly after, the national colors were flying over Marko's castle. They had won: When asked to explain their disobedience, they insisted that Marko Kralyevich had at that moment appeared before them, mounted on Sharatz, and had shouted: 'Forward!' and him they dared not disobey."

Outside of the Kralyevich Marko cycle of stories, a favorite with all was that of the marriage of the great Serbian Tsar, or Emperor, Dushan.

CHAPTER XVI

CHURO TELLS HOW THE MIGHTY TSAR DUSHAN WON THE FAIR ROKSANDA

WHEN Tsar Dushan the Mighty thought it time for himself to marry, he sent word to King Michael of Venetian Ledyen to beg that he give him as wife his daughter, Roksanda, whom he had never seen but of whose beauty many reports had reached him. Now after King Michael had given his consent, Dushan determined it were wise to assure himself that his proposed bride was really as attractive as he had been told. So he called Theodor, his State Counselor, to him, and requested him to go to Ledyen to arrange the necessary details for the wedding.

"But before we commit ourselves too far," he commanded, "be sure that she is worthy in every way for one in my station."

Theodor promised, and set out at once for the Venetian province. King Michael received him cordially, and for a full week entertained him most hospitably. Not until then

did Theodor state his mission and that he was empowered, as customary, to present the engagement ring to the bride.

To this the King answered:

"Tell your most honored Tsar that he may come whenever he chooses and that he is at liberty to bring as many wedding guests with him as he will. Only one thing do I request of him: that among them are not included his two nephews, Voukashin and Petrashin Voinovitch. Their quarrelsome reputation has reached even my ears, and I fear that in some way they might disturb the harmony I would desire on this great occasion. As for the Princess, she will receive the ring from you tonight, as is the custom."

That night Theodor was led into a dark room. He was wondering when it would be lighted, when he became aware that the Princess was there, too. He at once understood that this trick had been played on him to prevent his seeing her. However, the ring which the Tsar had sent was so brilliant that when he turned it toward the Princess it lit up her whole face. In its dazzling light she seemed to Theodor more fair than the fairest *vila*.[1] Bowing low before her, he presented her not

[1] Fairy.

only with the ring but with a gift of one thousand ducats from the Tsar, his master. She thanked him with a nod, and was then immediately led away by her brothers who were with her.

Next morning Theodor left, and traveled fast until he was again at the Tsar's palace. Dushan at once sent for him.

"O my trusted messenger," he said, "what news do you bring me from King Michael? And what have you to say of the fair Roksanda?"

Theodor gave the King's gracious message, and then swore that the Princess was as beautiful and enchanting as a dream.

The Tsar was delighted with everything except the news regarding his nephews. He swore a terrible oath at the fact that their ill fame should have spread so far.

"I shall have both of them hanged, when I return, before their own castle walls, that they no longer shame me," he said in his wrath.

Then Tsar Dushan sent around invitations to all that he desired to accompany him on his wedding journey, which he was resolved to make at once. All came, as in duty bound, in their richest attire, and on splendidly capari-

soned steeds, so that they formed a long, magnificent procession.

Their way lay by the castle of the Voinovitches, who watched them pass with sorrow in their hearts.

"Who could have belied us to our Uncle, the Tsar?" they said one to the other; "For some one must have done so since he has not invited us. Alas, that he should have no relatives to accompany him, to give him help freely in case of need. The people of Ledyen are not to be trusted, for since ancient times Venetians have been known for their treachery. But what can we do?"

Their aged mother now addressed them:

"O my beloved children, have you forgotten that you have a brother,—Milosh the Shepherd,—who is the greatest hero of you all? He will uphold the name of Voinovich for you. Send for him, but that he surely come and come quickly, tell him that my days are drawing to an end and that I would fain see him before I die."

The brothers gladly agreed, and acted as their mother had advised.

Now Milosh was herding sheep when the message came to him. He was so greatly affected that tears came to his eyes. When the

other shepherds saw this, they questioned him as to what sorrow had come to him, since never before had they seen him weep. Milosh told them that his mother was dying, and that he must set out at once to be with her at the end. He begged them to care for his sheep while he was gone, which they readily promised to do.

So Milosh hurried home, and when he came near, his brothers hastened to meet him, and to his surprise, his mother came with them.

"O brothers," he said reproachfully, "what is the meaning of this? Why have you deceived me?"

"Wait before you judge us," responded the brothers. "Come in, and we will tell you all."

When Milosh heard of how the Tsar had ridden away with no one who truly loved him near, he was very willing to join his Uncle as his brothers wished, to aid him should there be need.

"You must not make yourself known," the brothers cautioned. "Say that you have served a Turkish lord who refuses to pay you, and hence you have left to seek a better master."

Then Petrashin went out to get ready his splendid charger, Koulash, whose liken even

the Tsar did not possess; while Voukashin clothed his brother as was befitting the representative of their family. First he put on him a fine shirt of linen, embroidered with gold from the neck to the waist, and from the waist down all white silk. Over this he placed three rich ribbons, then a waistcoat with thirty buttons, and a golden cuirass. All this finery he covered entirely with a long, coarse Bulgarian cloak, and pulled a Bulgarian cap over Milosh's head, so that no one could recognize him. Finally, he armed him with a splendid six-edged mace, a warrior's lance, and his father's trusty sword.

Koulash, who was well known to the Tsar and his court, was also disguised, a big bear skin covering his back.

"Be sure to hold Koulash in check," both brothers advised as a parting word, "for he is used to going forward next to our Uncle's own charger."

Milosh set out and soon overtook the wedding procession. All greeted him as a Bulgarian, and when he said he'd like to join the servants for food and drink alone, they bade him welcome.

It happened that Milosh,—who as a shepherd was accustomed to sleeping at noon,—

did so now, and that Koulash, feeling the reins relaxed, leaped to the front like an arrow, overturning all who blocked his way, and placed himself next to the Tsar's own steed.

There was great confusion, and it would have gone hard with Milosh had Dushan not come to his rescue.

"All shepherds," said the Tsar, "sleep at noon, so the poor fellow is not responsible for what his horse has done. Awake him gently, I order you."

Since the Tsar ordered it, this had to be done, angry though the lords about him still were.

As soon as Milosh opened his eyes, he found himself in the front of the procession with Dushan himself gazing at him. Without a moment's pause, he gathered in the reins firmly and spurred Koulash so that he quivered and then sprung three lances high into the air, and forward more lances than one could measure, while blue flames came forth from his nose and mouth.

Then all the wedding guests wondered.

"How comes it," they said one to another, "that an ordinary Bulgar has such a steed? We only know of one such, and that is the pro-

perty of the Tsar's nephews, the brave Voinovitches."

Among those who wondered were three heroes who resolved to deprive the Bulgarian of his steed. They kept near him, and when they and he were some distance from the others, they asked him whether he would not exchange his horse for another and better, with a hundred ducats besides, and oxen and a plow so that he need never starve.

But Milosh answered: "Leave me, O heroes. Why should I want a better horse? I am satisfied. As for the ducats, I could not count so many. Now for the plow, my father never used one and yet our family did not starve."

The three were angry, and agreed that they must take the horse by force.

When Milosh was told that they would do this, he pretended to be alarmed and willing to accept the exchange. He put his hand under his cloak as if to take off his spurs, but instead, when it came out, it held the six-edged mace, with which he tumbled over the nearest hero so that he rolled over three times. The others had taken to flight, but he overtook the second easily and hurled him, also, to the ground, so that he rolled over five times; and then Koulash

swiftly overtook the third, who met the same fate, only that he rolled over seven times.

Milosh then hastened back to the wedding party, and nothing more occurred until they reached Ledyen and pitched camp under its walls.

The equerries now gave barley to all the horses except Koulash. When Milosh saw this, he took Koulash's nose-bag and going to each horse took a little of his food from him until Koulash had fully his share.

Next Milosh asked for wine, and when this was refused, so frightened the keeper that he allowed him to help himself.

CHAPTER XVII

HOW THE MIGHTY TSAR DUSHAN WON THE FAIR ROKSANDA *(Concluded)*

SHORTLY after, a page of King Michael called to the wedding party from a tall tower:

"Listen, O thou Serbian Tsar! You, or some one who will take your part, must fight a duel with our King's Champion, ere things go further. Else shall neither you, nor any one of your party, ever leave our gates alive, much less shall you have our glorious Princess in marriage."

Dushan at once sent a messenger among his guests to seek who would battle for him, but not one volunteered.

Then the Tsar was angry:

"Now I know," he said, "why the King did not wish me to take my two dear nephews, the Voinovitches. If either of them were here, he would fight for me."

As he said this, Milosh appeared on his steed before him and begged that he be allowed to take his place.

The Tsar was touched.

"I am afraid it will go hard with you," he said; "but should you succeed, I shall ennoble you."

Milosh, who had dismounted from his horse, remounted and carelessly threw his lance over his shoulder so that it pointed backward.

The Tsar called to him:

"Do not handle your lance that way or every one will laugh at you."

To this Milosh replied:

"O Tsar, do not fear for me, for I know what I am doing. If need arises I shall use the weapon rightly, and if there be no need, what matters it?" And he rode away.

As he went thus through the streets, the city maidens laughed:

"The Tsar has a great champion!" they said. "Why he hasn't even anything fit to wear!"

When the nephew reached the Champion's tent, he hurled his lance into the ground and fastened Koulash to it. Then he addressed the Venetian:

"Rise, thou little fellow! Let us fight at once for the honor of our masters."

But the champion looked at him with disgust.

"I'll not fight with you," he said. "You dirty fellow!"

"Rise, thou proud Venetian," said Milosh again, "and see me take thy rich clothing from thee."

The bully mounted his charger and caused him to prance and curvet around the field; then suddenly he hurled his lance straight at Milosh's breast. But the latter was watchful, and caught it on his gold-headed mace and broke it into three pieces.

This alarmed the Champion.

"Wait!" he cried. "My lance was faulty. I shall get me another."

But Milosh leaped on Koulash and overtook him as he rode for the gates. Alas, for the bully, these were closed. As he paused, Milosh sent his lance after him, and transfixed him with it to the wall. Then he alighted, struck off the bully's head, put it in Koulash's nose-bag, caught the man's steed, and with these rode to the tent of the Tsar.

The Tsar was overjoyed. He showered the supposed Bulgarian with ducats and bade him feast.

Scarcely had Milosh seated himself at a table, when the King's page again appeared in the high tower to proclaim something new.

"O Tsar," he cried, "in yonder meadow are three horses. On each of them is a flaming sword with the point upward. You, or some one for you, must leap over all three, or never leave this place alive, much less take with you our Princess Roksanda."

Again a messenger was sent among the guests, but no one volunteered to do what was required. The Tsar's head was bowed in sorrowful thought, when Milosh again appeared before him and begged the privilege of doing what was asked.

The Tsar consented, but anxious that his substitute should make a better figure than he had last time, begged him to take off his heavy coat.

"There is no need to worry about me, O Tsar," returned Milosh. "It's the hero's heart that matters and not the clothes he wears."

Then he went on to the meadow, where he found the steeds just as they had been described. He placed Koulash a certain number of steps from the third, and putting his arms about his neck, whispered into his ear:

"Do not move a step from here, my beloved, until I come back to you."

He then went back a certain distance beyond

the first steed, where, lifting himself on his toes a few times, he suddenly ran and leaped high over all three swords and straight on to the back of Koulash. Swiftly seizing the reins of the three steeds with their flaming swords, he rode with them to the Tsar's tent.

Dushan again gave him hundreds of ducats, and would have questioned him, when the page appeared a third time.

"Under the hightest castle tower," he announced, "is a thin lance on which is a golden apple. Twelve paces from it is a ring. Either you, O Tsar, or a substitute, must shoot an arrow through the ring into the apple, if you would depart in peace and have any hope that our Princess will go with you."

Without waiting, Milosh went to the Tsar and offered himself.

"Thou hast been successful before," the Tsar said, "but I greatly fear this newest test; yet go, and may God guide thy hand."

So Milosh went, and shot his arrow true. As the apple fell he caught it, and rode with it to the Tsar, who again gave him ducats without number.

Then the page appeared for the fourth time.

"You must now guess, O mighty Tsar, which of three maidens strikingly alike, is

Roksanda. I fear to tell what will befall, if you so much as touch another."

The Tsar at once sent for Theodor, his Counselor of State, and bade him pick out the right maiden. But Theodor excused himself, saying that the circumstances under which he caught a glimpse of the Princess made it utterly impossible to be certain of her on another occasion.

Then the Tsar was in despair, when once more Milosh stood before him.

"May I guess for you, O glorious Tsar?" he asked.

The Tsar smiled a little sad smile, as he inquired:

"How dare you attempt that?"

"O Tsar," replied Milosh, "I could tell twelve thousand sheep apart, and when three hundred lambs were born, I knew the mother of each of them. I shall know the Princess, never fear, by her resemblance to her brothers who attend her."

"Go, then," said Dushan, breathing deeply, "and God be again with you."

So Milosh went to where the three maidens awaited. They were very fair to see, and as much alike, at the first glance, as three peas in a pod. Milosh now took off his cloak and

threw on it many rings and sparkling precious stones. Then he unsheathed his father's sword:

"The Princess Roksanda alone," he said, "may gather these. If either of you two others so much as touch one of them, I will cut off her arms up to the very elbows."

Then he noted how two of the maidens looked at the third, and he, too, looked at her. She hesitated a moment, and then advanced and picked up all the jewels. When she had done so, the two others wished to escape, but Milosh would not allow them to do so, and led all three to the Tsar.

As Dushan received Roksanda he arose and kissed his champion between the eyes, and said he knew not how he could repay him.

It was now time to depart, and the Serbians hurried to do so. They had not gone far when Milosh came to Dushan with a new request:

"O great Tsar," he said, "in the city Ledyen lives Balatchko, a terrible hero with three heads, from one of which he shoots forth a blue flame, from another a wind that freezes. He has been training for seven years to stop whoever succeeds in the tests that have been given, and will follow you to take back the Princess.

Now I know him, and he knows me. Go on, but let me wait for him with three hundred of the heroes who are with you."

The Tsar, fearing for Roksanda, did as he was asked.

Now in the Venetian city King Michael, much disturbed that all should have succeeded beyond his expectations, summoned Balatchko to him.

"You know for what I have trained you," he said. "Will you follow and bring me back my daughter?"

But to the King's surprise, Balatchko hesitated.

"Who was that hero," he asked, "who was always victor?"

"Only a Bulgar," answered the King.

"Oh, no, King Michael," returned Balatchko, "that was no Bulgar! It was Prince Milosh Voinovitch, whom I know, but whom even his Uncle has not recognized. He is no ordinary hero, and it is he I shall have to meet."

But the King urged and commanded, and at last promised that Roksanda would be Balatchko's wife if he brought her back.

Then Balatchko set out on his fine mare, Bedevia, taking with him six hundred cuirassiers. At the edge of a nearby forest they

found Milosh, standing by the side of Koulash, awaiting them.

"Oh, Milosh," said Balatchko, riding up, "evidently thou awaitest me!"

Then he let out the blue flame, but it only scorched the wool on Milosh's coat. So he tried the freezing wind, which made Koulash fall three times into the dust, but did not effect his master at all.

Milosh now hurled his six-edged mace at Balatchko, who no sooner fell than the Serb transfixed him with his lance. It was easy then to cut off his three heads, which he threw in Koulash's nose-bag.

Mounting his charger, the brave fellow now led his three hundred heroes against the six hundred cuirassiers. Full half of the number of Venetians lost their heads; the rest returned to the city in wild flight.

It did not take Koulash long to bring his master back to the wedding party. Coming up to Dushan, Milosh cast the three heads at his feet. The Tsar gave him his last thousand ducats, and bade him ride at his side.

When they neared the castle of the Voinovitches, Milosh turned to part with Dushan:

"May God be ever with you, my good and beloved Uncle," he said.

Then for the first time Dushan knew to whom he owed so much.

"Is it thou, my dearest nephew?" he cried. "Happy am I that you are related to me, and happy, too, must be thy mother that she has given birth to such a hero as thou art!"

CHAPTER XVIII

HOME AGAIN

SPRING had again come, and Zorka's mother was decorating the house with long, green tree branches, having just finished giving the rooms a cleaning even more vigorous than usual. Every once in a while she sang snatches of song, as she stopped her work to see if some special food that she was preparing was progressing satisfactorily.

Zorka, in a nice clean dress, sat playing on the floor near the big table on which stood a newly filled pitcher of water. She was continually looking up to smile lovingly at her mother's happy face.

Something evidently was going to happen, for when Churo came to the door he had on his very best clothes.

And then Zorka gave away the secret by saying:

"My brother coming, Churo; my brother coming!"

"But aren't you a bit sorry that I'm going?" asked Churo.

"Yes, yes," the little girl answered, clinging to his hand. "Zorka want Milosh—want you too!"

Then suddenly there came a shout from the courtyard.

The mother dropped the branch which she was fastening to the wall, and ran to the door. The next moment she gave a cry, and threw her arms about Milosh, taller and browner than when he had left home.

"But where is father?" the mother asked as soon as she could say anything, while Milosh gave Zorka a hearty kiss and hug.

"Oh, he'll be along in a minute. I insisted on his letting me run across the fields to surprise you. My, I've had a great experience, but it's good to get home! I know you'll feel the same, Churo," Milosh added, turning to the latter and clasping him warmly by the hand.

Churo nodded soberly, and then he, too, gave a cry, for there, coming down the street, was his brother Bogdan, whom he had not expected to see until he was back in Montenegro.

"That is another surprise we planned," laughed Milosh happily, as he stooped down and kissed Zorka again. "And oh, *majka,*

just think, Bogdan has promised to spend two whole days with us before he takes away Churo!"

Bogdan and the father now came in, and the mother just couldn't wait until she had them all seated at the table and eating the good things that she had so bountifully prepared for this occasion.

A little later neighbors dropped in by twos and threes, and coffee and cakes were served to all.

"It's a feast day all right," said Milosh, and suddenly, after whispering something to Churo, both boys sprang into the open space in the center of the room, and, to the applause of all present, began a wild Montenegrin dance that Milosh had learned while in that country.

Then a neighbor, entering into the spirit of the occasion, brought over a kind of flute, called a *svirala,* and played all sorts of sad as well as gay airs on it.

"Let's dance the *kolo*," some one suggested, and as the house was not large enough, a ring was formed right in the street.

"And all in honor of my return!" Milosh whispered later to his mother, when the neighbors had departed. "Or is it because Churo's leaving? Say, Bogdan," he called out, "I'm

almost jealous of your brother! Why, everybody treats me as if I were a child, but they treat him as if he were already a man! Churo! Churo! come here. Mother says you've been like a real son to her, and she says she thinks it would be fine if you and I became *probratim,*—if we adopted each other as brothers, as you do so often in Montenegro, —before you leave!"

And here Milosh recited a toast to that union, which he had memorized while away from home:

"With thee, honored brother, with thee drink I today
In God's name.
The Virgin bless thine earthly store;
Increase thine honor more and more;
Be near thy friend with helpful deed,
But never thou his help to need.
. . . . . .
May God unite our house and land,
As we thus grasp each other's hand."

THE END

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