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## Sosivizka, the Bandit of Dalmatia.

THE biographer of this Illyrian Schinderhannes—who, after taking with his own hand a hundred and fifty lives, not including the victims of his various bands, lived to an honoured old age, and died the quietest of “straw-deaths”—begins with an apology for choosing such a subject, and by reminding us that many historians have blamed Sallust for transmitting to posterity the infamous name of Catiline. I will not follow his example. We have long ago nobly vindicated the dignity of meaner themes, the “right of literature to present persons of low estimation.” The career of our hero, though concluded in the latter fourth of the last century, also illustrates a phenomenal condition of society which has hardly yet passed away from the highlands of Dalmatia; and, to speak ethnologically, it is highly interesting as a comparison with the honourable confraternity of Saint Nicholas, especially the Mafia, the Camorra, the Brigantaggio, and the Malandrinaggio of more civilised lands.

But, first, a few words upon the subject of Morlachia, or rather its tenantry, the Morlaks, whom the Italians call “Morlacchi.” This race occupies, and has occupied for the last thousand years, the whole Dalmatian seaboard, to Englishmen almost a *terra incognita* at least before the last insurrection. Whilst the maritime cities may be called Italo-Venetian, this rude and rugged race of ploughmen, shepherds and plunderers, extends everywhere over the 300 miles between the frontiers of Croatia and Albania; and it monopolises the mountainous interior, from the Adriatic to the Bosnian or landward slopes of the Dinaric and other Alps, which here prolong the Apennines. To this tribe belonged the so-called “Jumpers,” that is “fugitives,” the “Uzkoks,” *Italiànè* “Uscocchi,” the pirate-scourge of Segna, in the Fiume, or Flanatic Gulf; and to it still belong the Crivosje, properly Kervosje, or “blood-men” (Kerv or Krv\*) of Budua and the southern frontier of Adriatic Austria, who have made themselves famous, even of late, for fanaticism and furious ferocity.

The Morlaks are a people very differently and indifferently judged by strangers. Most travellers, ancient and modern, give them the worst of characters for turbulence, cruelty and treachery; whilst the Cavaliere Nicolò Battaglini thus perorates his eulogy: “E quest’ uomo, cui pochi conoscono e molti vollero descrivero, viene dallo straniero *inimano e barbaro creduto.*”

\* When written without a vowel, the “r” assumes in pronunciation the indefinite “laut”-sound, and it is articulated with a trill belonging to no other European language. I should attempt to express it by “Krrrr.”

Oh! se ai semplici suvi costumi, se alle superbe doti del cuore vonisse dato un condegno tributo—ben d’ altra fama godrebbe.”

The tribal name is as variously derived by the several authorities. Lucius of Traù (ob. 1679), writing “De Regno Dalmatiae et Croatiae,” proposes Moro-Vlassi or Wallachs from the Black Sea, whose Scythian or Getæ accolents, in the days of Ovid, were the forefathers of the present Slavs; \* the old historian also erroneously rendered the name “black Latins” (neri Latini). A well-known author (Fortis, scrip. 1772) insisted upon it being pure Illyrian, “potenti venuti dal mare;” from More (Mor), the sea, and Vlà or Vlah, pronounced Vlakh, nobility, or power, whence Vlaki, Vlahi or (Vlacchi), Wallachs, Valaques. We will prefer that of Lambert (Hist. Gén. ii. 45), who reminds us that the mediæval Greeks called Upper Wallachia, the present Moldavia, “Maurolachia” (*Μαυρολαχία*), or Vallachia nera, an easy corruption of which would be Morlachia and Morlaks or black Wallachs. It may be noted that modern Illyria still calls the Greek Vlah (Vlakh), in the plural Vlaši or Vlassi, and insultingly Vlassina, whilst Vlaška-viro (“Greek faith”) is equivalent to *Punica fides*. Giovanni Lovrich in 1777 accepts this etymology, merely warning us that many other races, who besides the Wallachs peopled the country, assumed the same generic name; and he believes that the primary sense of Vlà (Vlakh) is buried beneath the ruins of time. In 1875 we detect it in the German Wall, as wal-nut or foreign nut, and in the Scandinavian Val, e.g. Val-land, Wales, the land of the stranger. The Bosniac Turks still know their troublesome neighbours as Karavlassi (black Wallachians). That Wallachia sent forth many a Daco-Roman tribe, we learn by the instance of Istria: here are two distinct emigrations, the more ancient called “Rumeni,” commonly “Cici,” † the charcoal-burners who frequent the streets of Trieste; and the modern are colonies occupying sundry villages and, Susgnevizza and others, lying north and north-north-east of Cepich, Istria’s only lake. The sole objections to this origin appear to be that

\* So Sarmatian, Sirmian, Serbian, and Servian, all have the same root. The word Slav is from Slava, glory; and such variants as “Slovene” and “Slovenski” arise not from Slavo, a word, a letter, but simply from the dialectic practice of changing the first into the fourth vowel.

† In Slav Čiča, in Italian Ciccio, plur. Cici. The word is popularly derived from the “ci” (tshi) sound so often recurring in the tongue (Giornale l’Istria, vol. i. p. 7, year 1846). Others take it from the Slav Čiča, a cousin, which is frequently addressed to elder men; like “barba” in Italy and Istria, and even like “compare” throughout the Italian peninsula. The charcoal-burners consider it slighting, and prefer to call themselves “Rumeni.” According to the learned Combi (Porta Orientale, No. ii. of 1868) there were in 1861 at least 2,200 Cici in the Val d’Arsa, not including those of Muni and Sejane towns, whilst about Lake Cepich in 1863 some 5,000 spoke Roumansh. The celebrated linguist Professor Ascoli (p. 179, Studi Critici, Milano, 1861,) says “Nessun lettore che m’ abbia fin qui seguito verrà più mettere in dubbio il Valachismo di codesto importante parlare Valdarsesc,” and he gives specimens of the Valdarsa dialect. In vol. i. page 425 of the Archivio Glottologico Italiano he adds, “nel parlare Veglioto (Veglia Island, in the Gulf of Fiume) è manifestissima la presenza dell’ elemento Rumeno.”

the Morlaks speak not Roumansch (Roumanian, Daco-Latin), but Slav; and are a warlike, energetic, violent race, whereas the Wallachians are essentially the reverse. But the Cici, their congeners, have also almost lost the mother-tongue, and the national spirit of the Dalmatians has been roused and raised by centuries of war and bloodshed with the Turk. Finally, those who know the Wallachians cannot for a moment doubt the derivation of the Morlaks; and the women still wear the iron-studded leather belt and other peculiarities of toilette preserved by their eastern kinsfolk.

Lovrich, who was personally familiar with the great bandit after he became "respectable," gives the portrait of "Stanislavo Sočivizka," supported by the significant lines of Ovid:—

Vox fera, trux vultus, verissima mortis imago;  
Quamvis lupi sævæ plus feritatis habet.

He figures and describes him, at the age of sixty-one, as a tall, robust and well-made man, with many years of life before him, despite his wounds and the excessive hardships inseparable from the career of a "gentleman in difficulties." His face was long and clean-shaved, except the usual drooping mustachio; and his blue eyes were sharp and fierce. The dress is a čaka, or tall cylinder cap, of Astrachan wool; a white shirt, full-puffed at the cuffs; a close-fitting, flapped jacket; a waistcoat, embroidered about the button-holes; a sash of many folds; uskegače, or tights, with hooks-and-eyes extending behind from ankle to mid-calf; and the usual "opanke," or raw-hide sandals of Slavonia, whose pointed toe-tips were turned heel-wards when the avenger of blood or foray was on the path. He has a "belly-full of weapons," like the modern Arnaut; four pistols and a khanjar, the long Turkish dagger with knuckle-bone handle, are stuck in his belt: along his thigh is slung a short, heavy, broad, and curved scimitar, with one-bar guard, and metal sheath showing the leather below; and a long single-barrelled flint-gun is held in the redoubtable right hand, which never missed the foe, and which could drive a bullet into the opposing barrel.

This typical personage was born about 1715, at Vragnska, distant some 16 miles from Trebigne, a large town in the Ottoman Herzegovina, concerning which we have read much of late. His father "Vuk" (the Wolf) was a poor-devil peasant of the Greek rite: he and his four sons laboured on the lands belonging to certain wealthy Turks, known to history by the impracticable name of "Umetalčichi" (Khanahdân Hamet or Ahmed el-Siki?). This race must not be confounded with our long-robed Ottoman friends further east: a Tartar strain modified and refined by centuries of mixture with Georgian, Circassian, Greek, and a dozen other higher bloods. The Turk of Bosnia and Herzegovina is simply a Scythian, a Slav, speaking no other language, preserving Illyrian names, wearing the ancient dress of the country, and in mind as well as in body a congener or rather cousin of the Morlak. Utter barbarians, far removed from the civilisation of the capital, they are still the most turbulent, fanatical and bloodthirsty of their brood, ever ready, as the affair of Podgorizza in 1874 shows, for a murder or a massacre; and, after many a generation,

they preserve all the bitter hatred of renegades to the form of faith from which they apostatised. Hence the death of a Turk, by fair means or foul, is a "feather in the cap" of the Morlak, and the more he kills the higher is his religious merit. Even during the reign of the late Prince Danilo of "Montenegro"—which I will not call by its Venetian corruption "Montenegro"—a medal was given not for valour in the field, but for its result, bringing in a head of a Turk.

The Hamet family bullied and harried their unhappy serfs; and, with the usual Moslem inconsequence and fatalism,—which by the by is quite as strong amongst the Slavs,—the three brothers, after raising the "Araç" (Kharaj, or poll-tax) from their various villages, to the tune of 1,800 sequins, went to lodge and sleep with the Wolf and his four cubs. At night the guests were quietly murdered and buried in a hole outside the house. The foul deed, probably looked upon as a mere matter of vengeance, brought with it no more remorse than if the victims had been bears from the mountains. The "haunting conscience" of the murderer, as we find it, for instance, in the picturesque pages of Mr. Dickens, seems mainly to arise from a lively vision of the rope. The only repentance of the homicidal Somal is a sombre regret that he has not killed a few more men; and my friend, Azrael Pasha of Damascus, would witness the torture and death of an enemy with *acre volupté*, and probably in the spirit of "vixi diem," he would remember the hour as one of the happiest in his life.

Curious to say, no suspicion at first fell upon the assassins. Sulayman Pasha, and Firdaus Passich the war-captain of Trebigne, contented themselves with killing and enslaving some fifty Christian rayahs, who would not confess to a guilt of which they were innocent; and, as 'is still the Ottoman practice, they compelled the hapless villagers to refund the plunder carried off by others. This happened in 1745 when Sosivizka,\* now aged thirty, having tasted first blood, became even more audacious and turbulent than before, and displayed to the world his rich clothes with cynical indifference. As society began to mutter, the brothers took with them the venerable Wolf, who died on the road, and flitted to Imoski (Imoschi, the Roman Emota), nearer the triple frontier. The "strepitoso bandito"

\* Every traveller offers his own scheme for Latinising the peculiarly Slav letters: č, š, ž, and ž. I will follow the majority:—

č may also be written without the acute accent. It is pronounced "ts" or "tz;" and, Italianised, is often written with a "tz," with "zc;" or a double z, e.g. Podgorica or Podgoriča, becomes Podgorizza or Podgorizza; so Sosivizka becomes "Sosivizka," and Ilajdači "Aiduzci," in Italian.

č is simply ch in church; it is often written ch, as Stessich for Stossič.

š like the preceding is the aspirated form of the simple "s" consonant: sh in shau.

ž again is aspirated z; we ignore it in English, but the French preserve it in Jour, and it is essentially Persian, e.g. Azhdaha (آژدها) the fabled dragon.

Finally, it may be noted that the vulgar of Dalmatia, speak of "Illyrico" in contradistinction to Slavo: the former is the adulterated tongue of cities, the latter the pure Slavonian of the mountains.

often renewed this manœuvre, oscillating, as need required, between the Turkish, the Venetian, and the Montenegrin dominions, and keeping his best behaviour for Austria, where, as will be seen, he peaceably spent his time-honoured old age.

At Imoski, between the Narenta River and the town of Sign, the brothers built a house and opened two richly-stocked stores. But Sosivizka belonged to no nation of shopkeepers; he scorned to be "a merchant and a man," and he persuaded a little troop of ten kinsfolk and companions to accompany him far south into Montenegro; where they distinguished themselves by massacring forty Turks during the first summer, and by attacking the vanguard of a caravan. When on the raid, one of the party lost his gun, and Sosivizka, like a captain of men, as he was, set out to take the first weapon he could annex. Suddenly he found himself in the neighbourhood of a caravan; where first two and then six Turks charged him with being what he was, an arrant "Hajduk." The word is Turkish (Haydúd), and means simply a highwayman, a fugitive from justice, generally in consequence of what the Brazilians call a "little death" (mortezinha), meaning some savage murder which entails the blood-feud. These knights of the road are the lineal descendants of the Uzkoks,\* most cruel of pirates, with this difference that, whereas the "Jumpers" respected neither nation nor religion, the Morlaks murdered only Turks. "A capite bona valetudo," says Seneca, and the safety of the troop depended solely upon its Agamemnon: all dispersed when he happened to grace stake or gibbet. The number seldom exceeded thirty, who, peaceful cultivators during the season, like the Arabs of the Persian Gulf, took the field on the Festival of St. George (O. S. the Mod. Greek, April 19), hence the proverb "Juvev danski, Hajduki sastanski (George's Fête, bandits meet)." So Florus tells us, "Dalmatiae sub silvis agunt, ideo ad latrocinia promptissimi;" the reason being that the woods were then leafy enough for ambushades. They did not murder women and children except for the vendetta or by accident. The pathetic name Moyanka (My-Anno), given to a rocky defile seven miles from Sign on the Spalato road, also called Zenski Klanaz, or the "Woman's Pass," arose from the chance death of a bride in a skirmish of Hajduks, when the bridegroom, or, according to some, the mother, made the echoes ring with the *piagnistico* or keening cry, "Anka Moja, Moja Anka" (mia Annuccia! my Annie)! Hajduk is the old Turkish name for the irregular cavalryman, afterwards called a Bashi-Bazuk or *tête gâtée*. And it must not be supposed, that these freebooters degraded themselves by mixing with the Lupež, or petty thief. They were the nobility of the profession; and it is recorded that, when a judge asked a Hajduk why he robbed, the latter asked why he judged? Kismet! you're a judge and I'm a thief.

Sosivizka was thoroughly equal to the occasion; he diverted the attention of his eight arresters by firing a shot and calling aloud for aid. When

\* From Uzići, to ascend, to issue forth.

the Turks turned in the expected direction, he gave leg-bail, and, by falling flat on the earth, he escaped the matchlock bullets that rained over head and body. He then cut down one man with his scimitar, shot a second, finishing him with his pistol, and, as his comrades came up, put the other six to ignoble flight.

Satisfied with this exploit, Sosivizka retired to Imoski, where, says the annalist, "he married a wife, and he lived tranquilly for nine years, contenting himself with killing, by way of disport, an occasional Turk." But one of his brothers would not keep quiet; and amongst his Hajdući companions was a certain Pezčirep, whose main diversion was to spit and broil Turks alive: he at last fell into Moslem hands, and was duly seated upon the stake where he lived three days, hurting the feelings of his tormentors by jeering and smoking his pipe. Unhappily, the brother had contracted with a Greek fellow-religionist the peculiar tie called "pobratimstvo," half-brotherhood, or literally, "at-brotherhood." This Morlak custom which is the *Munh-bolá-bháui* (mouth-called-brother), of Hindostan, and the *fratelli giurati* of Italy, belongs to that stage of society, Syrian for instance, in which a man depends for the protection of his life and property solely upon kith and kin. It was a religious rite; the two stood before the altar, whilst mass was being recited, with lighted tapers, which afterwards became the priest's perquisite; they were bound to die in each other's defence, and the deepest infamy was the award of perjury. The women also had *posestrimo* ("at-sisters"), or semi-sorelle; and the tie was recognised, as in India, between the sexes, until the *calogeri* (*καλογέροι*) or ecclesiastics, who, sometimes pure themselves always suspect impurity in others, thought proper to abolish it. It was a general custom, not confined to the Latin Church. Our *Græculus esuriens*, also a Morlak and, an Ottoman subject, at once betrayed his half-brother for a consideration to the Turks of Travnik, who put him to death after eight days of indescribable tortures. Sosivizka at once set out to investigate the affair, and he seems to have acted throughout like a simpleton, without any of the judgment and acumen which usually marked his movements. He allowed the traitor's father to throw the blame upon others. He permitted the traitor himself to set out for Duvno, distant some twelve miles, under pretence of fetching a lamb from a distant fold. And when the Greek did not return, he went quietly to sleep with the family, not even noticing that the fire had been put out, and that his arms had been removed.

But a Certain Personage is said to take care of his own. The bandit woke up with a start, and, striking a light, missed his weapons. As he demanded them with a furious voice, an old hag said gruffly to him, "Silence, fellow, and don't awake the family!" But he was now on the alert; the old man when asked for the arms pretended to know nothing about them, and Sosivizka at once killed him with his own hatchet. The hag handed him what he required, and he left the house to watch the result. Shortly after, the trampling of horses was heard, and a party of Turks rode up only to find the bird flown.



Our Hajduk returned to Imoski, resolved upon a terrible "vendetta" for the double treachery. This fury for revenge exists in what we may call the Bedawi and the semi-Bedawi stages of society, from the "Red Indian" to the Corsican. It is a religious duty. The ghost of the murdered man cannot rest; he haunts the family; even the screech owl and the cuckoo are the voices calling for vengeance. The Albanian or Montenecrin mother will still hang up the blood-stained paternal shirt, and show it to her sons till they take the murderer's life. Hence we shall see that a brother, not a friend, is compelled to behead his wounded brother who ran the risk of falling into Ottoman hands, and when a criminal was shot a multitude took part in the execution. If blood-money (*patiti Krvarinu*) was accepted, a long ceremony took place. On a fixed day the manslayer, wearing the fatal weapon round his neck, crawled up to the head of the assembled family, and implored his pardon. The latter, taking the arm, cried in a loud and terrible voice, "Brethren! here is the slayer of our kinsman, will ye that I put him to death?" The reply was, "Pardon him, in the name of God!" The homicide then kissed the feet, the knees, the hands, and finally the lips, of the "Domachin" (house-master); and thus peace was made. Then all sat down to a copious feast, paid for by the murderer, in addition to the 50-50 sequins of "blood-money." Yet the national saying was, and still is, "Onse ne osvęti, onse ne posvęti"—*Qui non vindicat, non sanctificatur*. The universal practice is a curious comment upon the theory of Christianity.

In due time Sosivizka marched with a troop of seven men; set fire to the straw-hovel during the night, and burned to death seventeen of the family who happened to have had a general merry-making; one unfortunate woman, carrying her baby, rushed through the flames to the door, and both fell riddled with matchlock balls. The Ottoman authorities thereupon complained to the Venetian "general" of Dalmatia; and the latter obliged them by ordering the punishment of the accomplices. Sosivizka's house was razed to the ground, and a price (*taglia*) of twenty sequins was placed on his head, or double the sum if he were taken alive. On August 15, 1754, the outlaw, happening to be at the fair of Sign, famous even now for its jousting and other remnants of the olden time, saw a troop of mounted Croats taking, by way of precaution, an unusual road, and at once "smelt a rat." He hurried over the wildest and roughest country to Imoski, carried off his family and his goods; and when the soldiers arrived, they found nothing awaiting them but the four walls.

Sosivizka retired to Austrian Carlovatz, near the Zermagna river north-west of Knin; "a place," says his biographer, "scantily adapted for one whose maxim was to slay Turks." Here he lived nearly three years, with his family, now consisting of wife, "pigeon's pair," and two surviving brothers; if not troubled, he might have kept the peace for the rest of his natural life. "Mount your best mare, and the Turk will catch you on a lame ass," say the Bedawin, and this sleuth-hound quality is one of the strong points of the race. The Faithful paid largely, and

secured the three brethren by treachery, which was again fatal to the traitor. A hundred armed men led the prisoners from Cuc beyond Udbina, near the triple frontier, to Kukavica, the same Pasha of Travnik who had slain the fourth. The usual alternative, the stake or *el-Islam*, was offered, and Christian Sosivizka became Mohammedan "Ibrahim;" whilst one of the brethren was honoured with the title of Agha. But the new dignitary took the first opportunity of levanting with another brother; and he of the three tails, sorely vexed, loaded his remaining prisoner with chains.

Sosivizka, finding the lion's force of little avail, proceeded to enact the fox. He "got religion," he became a penitent, docile, and zealous Moslem; and, after the change had been noticed, he took the opportunity of saying to his guards, "I deserve this punishment for my crimes, and can hardly regret it; but what weighs upon my heart is the money buried in the hills, and lent to my friends. If the Pasha would recover it, I am ready; but I must go myself, for no one else knows where it is, and of course the debtors will deny the debt." He counted upon awaking Turkish greed, which is ever blind, and he succeeded, after a fashion, with perhaps more of loss than of gain.

The Pasha sent the Hajduk under charge of an *effendi* and ten men, who were ordered to keep guard, with lighted matches, night and day. For a month they were arrantly deceived by their own cupidity; but as all the attempts at digging and debt-claiming proved mere pretences, they revenged themselves by enticing to Sign, from the county of Zara, their prisoner's wife and family, a boy and girl, who were at once put under arrest. Whilst the mother and daughter bent over the *effendi's* hand, Sosivizka suffered in silence, but when the son was ordered to follow suit, he roared out in a rage, "Get out of that, don't kiss the dog's hand!" and the Turks almost begged his pardon, Turkishly declaring the ceremony to be a mere custom.

On the 26th of an icy November in 1758 the *effendi* determined upon returning with his precious charge to Travnik. The bandit was escorted out of his house; and, as one of the soldiers drew near to conduct him, he struck out with the chain and cried, "Passia-dushka (dog-soul)! dost thou think me a woman to be handed about?" The whole family was placed on horseback, surrounded by the Turks, and for greater security by forty Austrian *Pandurs* or *Bandurs*, urban soldiery or *maręchaussęe*. The good people of Sign pitied their sad condition, and the sufferings of the innocent for the guilty; and the most charitable contributed certain moneys which were not spent for the purpose intended.

Sosivizka laid out the alms in plying his escort with *rakia*—the *raki* (arrack) of the nearer East, grape-brandy flavoured with aniseed; all pronounced him a "jolly good fellow" and pledged him in so many toasts ("brindisi") that their heads began to whirl. They passed out of the Venetian dominions above Brilibrigh, at the foot of the Dinarian Alps: where the Hajduk, complaining of excessive cold, begged for more cloth-

ing: when a kabanica, or hooded cloak of felt, was thrown over his shoulders, he contrived unseen to cut the rope which bound him to the saddle. Reaching the Turkish post, called the Torre di Prologh, not far from Brilibrih, some wished to halt, as it was twenty-four o'clock (6 P.M.); but the majority insisted, like asses returning to the stable, upon proceeding straight homewards. They had hardly marched two musket-shots, when Sosivizka felled the nearest guard with his manacles, and, throwing himself from his horse, slid down the frozen side of a ravine, and crouched behind a tree-trunk. The Turks judged that he would continue his flight, and hoping every moment to hear the clanking of chains, far overshot the mark.

Meanwhile night set in, and Sosivizka used the darkness to journey past Torre di Prologh once more into Venetian territory. The snow nearly blinded him; the Bora, a furious north-easter, deafened him; and troops of wolves howling with the cold, surrounded him. His bilboes prevented him from climbing a tree, and he prepared to use them as weapons; "but," says the moralising biographer, "un lupo non mangia mai dell' altro." He persevered, and presently found himself in a place of safety.

The Turks, after a long and useless search, hung their heads in shame, and returned to Travnik with the three remaining captives. The mother stoutly refused to be converted; but the children were more amenable to reason, and the daughter passed into the harem of the Pasha Kukavića, who declared that "such fine blood should not be for a dish for Morlaks." The obstinate and vindictive dignitary, determining to secure the bold outlaw alive or dead, sent messengers with peremptory letters demanding him from the Venetian General of Dalmatia, and obtained for only answer, that the Turks should not have been such fools as to let their prisoner escape.

The Morlaks, hearing of the adventure, at once composed a "canzone" in honour of the bandit; and there is no doubt that had he lived in earlier ages his fame would have equalled that of the national hero, the King Arthur, Marco Kraglievich, whose name is in every mouth. It is preserved in the "Canzoni Eroiche Nazionali," a volume first printed by Father Kácić Miošič (Cadcich Miošich), and the frequent reprints have kept it from oblivion. Some of the verses have a charming sound, whilst they look utterly barbarous in their Latin dress. For instance (Pismo od Rados.):

Ustaniše Kraglin Radoslave\*  
Zloga legga, i zorizen zaspa  
Oubikete Lika i Karbáva  
Ravni Kotar do bode Cettina.

\* The orthography is that of Fortes and Lovrich, old-fashioned. Radoslavo, from the old ruce-root Slava (glory, fame, honour), means one who "works for glory;" Stanislavo (Stanislans) one who "stands for fame," and Vladislavo, one who "rules (vladika) for honour."

Anglicè

King Radoslavo, rise up and away!  
Thy couch is fatal, and late the day;  
In Karbáva and Lika the rebels rave  
O'er the Kotar plains to the Cettinn's wave.

So in the Pismo, or Song of Radoslavo:—

Dozivgliega Vila Posestrina  
S' velbite vissoec Planine  
Zloga siu Kraglin Radoslave  
Eto nate dvanajest delja.

But his Fairy "half-sister" in sorrow cried,  
O the Bibbian Alp from the rugged side:  
King Radoslavo, why sitt'st thou here,  
When a dozen Dellis are hastening near?\*

Again, there is a something of Eastern wildness in the following:

Jasce kogna Marco Kraglievichiu:  
S' iednom smiom kogna zauzlaic,  
A drughamu za kanchiu slusci.

Or

Marco the prince pricks forth his steed;  
In one hand a snake serves the bridle's need,  
And the other hand grasps the whip.†

And what can be prettier than this chorus, inviting the Morlak girls to come out and dance the "Circle"?

Odi u kolo, duško moja!  
There to the ring, thou soul of mine!

The "rude Morlachian boor," whose muse is a vila or fairy, never studies poetry, and cannot even read and write; yet the people compose verses which never lack a syllable, and these fly through the mouths of men, sung to every gusla (guitar) ‡ without losing a word. Unfortunately, the Song of Sosivizka has never been published.

Our Gasperoni applied repeatedly to the Pasha of Travnik for the release of his family; but he found the Turk a deaf adder, and finally addressed a letter to him in these words: "I have heard, O Pasha of Bosina! that thou deplorest my escape. I ask thee how in my case

\* The Vila is here a supernatural being who has contracted the Posestrim tic with the ill-fated king: the Italians translate "Vellebit (not Vellebitch, as Mr. Paton has it) by Alpe Bebie: the Planina is a mountain plateau; and Delja, a champion or hero, is from the Turkish Dilli, a madman, desperado, hence Byron makes the Ottoman lead—"His turbaned Dellis in the field."

† Lovrich (p. 131) translates this line carelessly, "L'altra di spron gli serve." I am unwilling to teach Illyrian to an Illyrian, but Kanchi is simply a corruption of the Turkish Kamchi, a whip, a switch. Moreover, the hand-maiden "Phil," my Illyrian "Shaykhah" inverts the second two words to "Kraglievichiu Marco."

‡ Made familiar by "La Guzla"—Prosper Mérimée's so-called Servian and Illyrian Songs: then by the "Théâtre de Clara Gazul"—anagram of Guzla.

thou wouldest have acted? Remain bound like the vilest of beasts, and suffer thyself voluntarily to be led before men who, in all probability, would have given thee that death which Nature prompts all men to avoid? And what have I done beyond obeying the general law (of self-preservation)? But say, O Pasha! what crimes have been committed by my wife and children, that thou thus keepest them captives by thy side? Thinkest thou to make me more docile by means like these? Thou erreest! Thou makest me only fiercer. But hear me: continue to vent thy useless rage upon my family, and I will let loose my wrath against thy Turks, and work them the direst ills. Ah! restore to me, I pray thee, my blood; forget past injuries, and obtain my pardon from the sovereign. I will leave thy subjects in peace: I will even defend them from the dangers of the road. But if thou refuse my petition, expect everything that can come from human despair. I will collect companions; I will cut off thy merchandise, I will spoil thy traders; and I vow the most solemn of vows to God in heaven from this moment, if thou disregard my prayer, to massacre every Turk who shall fall into my hands!"

This is hardly the style of correspondence which sounds grateful to official ears; and Pasha Kukavica, naturally enough, repaid the insult by ignoring it. Thereupon Sosivizka proved himself as good as his word. He collected twenty men, and marched towards Serraglio, many days beyond the territory of Venice, for he was careful not to play tricks within the "Serenissima Republica." The party fell upon a caravan of a hundred horses, guarded by seventy men, who incontinently fled, leaving one dead, a Jew who preferred losing his life to parting with his ducats. As Arambassi, or captain of the country, a title abolished only when the Austrian Constitution was proclaimed, Schinderhannes carried off the lion's share. The Turks who, "like the dogs of Morlachia," are brave only at home, sought him diligently. "It was *Sosivizka* in the mountains, *Sosivizka* in the valleys, *Sosivizka* on the plains, *Sosivizka* in the forests;" but Sosivizka, who knew a few words of Turkish, and who had donned the turban, was quietly indulging himself with food and drink in the market-place of Serraglio, where no one suspected him of daring certain death.

After a few days the bandit and his troop retired to the Greek convent of Dragovich, seven miles south of the Cettina Sources and north-east of Knin. Here he entrusted his booty to the Caloger Genadia, a good monk, who, though a strict abstainer from flesh-meat, and condemned to a diet of "dairy" and to the succulent trout of the neighbouring river, yet had no remorse in harbouring robbers and murderers; and thus the convent became a sanctuary and something worse. The Morlaks deride their regulars for eating eggs whilst they refuse a fowl; declaring the former to be morely poultry in grain. And of their Latin rivals, they sing—

I Latini saran tutti dannati,  
Per aver rane e bovoli mangiati.

*i.e.*—Dammed are all the Latins, for eating frogs and toads.

From this den of thieves Sosivizka, who often spread the report of his own death, so harassed his enemies, never hesitating to attack two, three, and even four men, that the lieges reproached the Pasha, saying: "Dost thou wish to see the Moslems' faith extinct?" But that dignitary, slow and persevering as a Chinese, contented himself with placing a higher price on the outlaw's head. The next adventure which made a name was an encounter with one Acia (Haji?) Smaich, a braggart, who boasted everywhere that the Kafir refused to fight him. But, in 1770, Sosivizka, "who would have given a kingdom for the opportunity," accompanied by only six men, fell in with the fire-eater and his brother, at Ticevo, in the Turkish dominions. "Acia Smaich" fired his matchlock; the ball struck the Hajduk full, they say, on the brow, and only cut the skin. "It was my fortune," afterwards remarked Sosivizka, a born fatalist like all his fellows, "to raise my head at that moment, in order to observe the enemy." He replied by one ball, which went straight into his opponent's barrel—a prodigy of markmanship often recounted in such duels between Christians and Turks,—and by a second, which passed through the foeman's skull. Seeing their man of valour on the ground, his companions fled; but not fast enough to prevent five of them from biting the dust.

This "geste" gained the honour of a second "heroic song;" and Sosivizka, whose name was now used, like Richard of England's, to frighten naughty Saracen children, dispersed his band, rightly judging that the enemy would pay less attention to an individual. About two months afterwards he collected a fresh party, and marched towards one of the largest Ottoman towns, Mostar, the "old bridge," so called after its Roman work: it has lately appeared in the "Illustrated." Here, from his lair under a tree, he espied two Turks walking along the road. His companions prepared to attack them in force; but he disdained the cowardly action, saying, "I'm enough!" As he approached them, staring at the ground, they asked him what he was looking for. He replied, "This is the place where that scoundrel Sosivizka carried off my horse, and I'm trying to track it!" The artless Faithful joined in the search, till one of them was pistoled, and the other cut down; both being so quickly despatched that their hands could not find their arms.

A few days after this trifle (fattarello), Sosivizka, whose head seems to have been turned by the "heroic songs," and possibly by separation from his family, committed a most atrocious act, which brought its own penalty. With twenty-five men he attacked a large caravan carrying to Turkey the "Visellini" (Vižlin) of Ragusa: these obsolete coins, then made at the "Slave Athens," have won the opprobrious name of "puppy dogs,"\* because they passed for a silver ducat, and more, of Venice, when they were not worth a quarter; needless to say, they were highly valued by their Christian manufacturers and exporters. Seventeen Turks were slain in the *m'lee*, and three were taken prisoners. Sosivizka trussed two

\* Probably from "vižle," a watch-dog.



of the wretches on spits, in the nearest wood, whilst he made the third turn and baste them before the fire. When they were thoroughly "done," he cut off the heads, and sent them by the survivor to Travnik, adding the threat, that he would serve the same measure to all future captives, and concluding with, "Oh! how great would be my joy, if I could only impale and roast the Pasha himself!" The troop wished to kill the turnspit, but their Arambassà swore that he should be left alive to tell the horrid tale.

The rumour spread like wildfire, and, in two hours, a *levée en masse* of Ottomans, on horse and on foot, fell upon the bandits, who had not left the wood, and wounded six, one of whom was beheaded by his own brother, to save him [from the infamy of the stake, and to obviate all possibility of a blood-feud. The pursuit ceased only at Metcovich, in the district of Primorje, the old Parathalassia, Pagania, or Maronia, the maritime tract between Spalato and the Narenta River.

This disgraceful flight separated the *Roi de la montagne* and his subjects. The former was compelled by the rancorous search of the blood-hounds to pass months of fear, and hunger, and solitude in the caves of the wildest ranges, and his only *pass-temps* was, now and then, to "bag a pair of Turks." Meanwhile, Pasha Kukavica, of Travnik, who had given dissatisfaction to his government, when proposing to pay his men by sacking his capital, was recalled to Constantinople, and duly decapitated. He had a beautiful wife, whom he dearly loved, and, foreseeing his fate, he is said to have divorced and married her to a friend, on condition that the child about to be born should bear its father's name.

Sosivizka tried the temper of the new Pasha, but, finding him as bad as his old foe, he presently determined upon the following "game of head" (*giuoco di testa*). Early in 1772 he sent one of his gang, in the disguise of a Calaiçi, or silk-pedlar (Kalajji),\* into Travnik, while he himself, with four others, lay two or three miles outside. By some mischance he was found alone by a triad of Turks, who charged him with being a Hajduk; he denied the soft impeachment, and declared himself a poor traveller wending his way to Prusazk town. "Then we'll go together!" said the suspicious and obstinate Moslems. The bandit waited till they dismounted; he then struck off a couple of maggoty heads with his scimitar, led the third—who trembled like a sparrow fascinated by a hawk—under the nearest tree-clump, learned from him all that his enemies were doing, and killed him in the coolest blood. Moreover, not content with this murder, he hacked the victim to pieces, and, in a paroxysm of fury and frenzy, tore the flesh with his teeth like a wild dog. He must have been a caution to his comrades when they rejoined him!

\* The word has fearfully and wonderfully changed sense *en route* from Arabia to Dalmatia. The Illyrian Kalaj (pronounce Kalai) is the Turkish Kalai كلاي, and Kalajji—in Illyrian, Kalajdžija—is properly a tinner of copper vessels.

A few minutes afterwards Sosivizka, with transports of joy, received his wife and son in his arms. The sham silk-pedlar had succeeded. The mother had the courage to escape by night, despite the ghosts which people the Morlachian brain; her daughter had refused to leave the harem, now her home, and it is to her credit that she did not denounce her parent. The double evasion was not detected till the next morning, when the fugitives were well on their way to the usual asylum, Dragovich. The boy was placed with a citizen, to learn reading and writing—we will score a good mark to his father. The Turks thereupon wrote urgent letters, demanding the capture or death of the robber, to the government general of Dalmatia, and obtained for all answer a determined "*Non possumus*." It was by no means easy to catch a man who, despite the Turkish rounds and patrols, would travel hundreds of miles in a fortnight; killing an enemy one day and, during the dark hours, covering fifteen to sixteen leagues. In fact, he came to be looked upon as a "bogie," or evil spirit, and some declared there was no Sosivizka.

This was not the case with a certain heroical "Curbek," who spoke of the great Bandit as a beggarly Slav. "Puoffurbacco!" exclaims the biographer; "this insult put Sosivizka in a pretty temper." Shortly afterwards the two met: their shock was fierce; but the Moslem lost four of his twenty men; he was wounded, and he saw the rest of his suite take to headlong flight, whilst only two of the Christians were hurt. Nevertheless, a certain Vilembegh (Wali Bey) addressed a letter to the Hajduk in these terms: "Thou, who vauntest thyself the scourge of Turks, if thou be not a woman, accept my *cartel*, and meet me, either singly or with equal numbers, as may please thee!"

Sosivizka, on reading this rhodomontade, at once collected a dozen men; but he was too prudent to risk another ambush, and the boastful Mohammedan went about, proud as a peacock (*pavoneggiando*), swearing that the appointment was not kept. But he had soon to eat his words: his forty men, who presently surrounded the little band, were deceived by fur caps hung to the trees; and, after losing eight lives, they broke, declaring the enemy to be wizards (*istregoni*). Doughty Vilembegh, the champion of el-Islam, saved himself only by a cowardly flight to the territory of Venice.

Even the Turks could not withhold their admiration of such a feat; and a Moslem girl, who heard everywhere the name of Sosivizka, proposed herself as "half-sister" of one whom her feminine instinct guessed to be stalwart in love as he was valiant in war. She sent him a richly-embroidered marama (the Arab. *mabramah* or napkin), with twelve sequins,—this earnest of her friendship was afterwards stolen by a mean nephew of the magnanimous robber. But he was not always so fortunate, and he soon found reason to forswear brotherhood with Moslems as well as with Greeks. He had a Turkish "pobratim," probably a tailor, from whom he ordered a dozen hooded cloaks (*kabanice*), settling where and when they were to be delivered. The secret leaked out, and the Chris-



tians found themselves in presence of a multitude of infidel dogs. The proletariat advised a retreat, but their Arambassà spoke thus: "If we take to flight, we shall be followed, and the result is doubtful; let us rather conceal our weakness by our courage, and let us go forth to meet the hounds with a discharge of musketry as if we were the vanguard of a large party." The band obeyed, took shelter, and, suddenly starting up, killed eight at the first fire; most of the enemy ran away, but a few of the bravest made a resolute stand, which was well nigh fatal to Sosivizka. One of the horsemen pressed him so hard that he was upon the point of falling under the scimitar, when a shot from his brother stretched the Turk upon mother-earth.

Sosivizka, after an escape so narrow, retired into Venetian territory, and lay *perdu* for some time, never appearing in public except to send a couple of the circumcised to kingdom come. The terrible plague of Sign in 1763 had been fatal to the bravest of his comrades, and not a few had been captured and slain by the enemy; so he retired into Austrian ground about the Zermagna river. His place as Arambassà was taken by a certain Zuanno (John) Bussich, called Rufus (Rosso), who till 1776 commanded some twenty men. Being a Latin, he was equally troublesome to the Turks. Presently he was deserted by his Hajduks, but in 1777 he collected another band; so true it is that all this outlawry depends only upon the fame and activity of the "caput."

Sosivizka had entrusted his plunder to various friends, who traded with it in the county of Zara; and he often crossed over to Ostrovica, relying upon the Montenerin peasantry, the colonists of that region, and other parts of Dalmatia. Thereupon Stefano Nakich, Colonel of the Knin territory, resolved to take him alive, and sent fifty Pandùrs, under an Arambassà named Scravica. They found the great Hajduk playing at bowls with a friend, "unco fou" as himself. The comrade was killed by the first fire; Schinderhannes, when climbing to a ruined tower perched upon a high rock, was shot through the thigh, and he would infallibly have been captured, had not some drunken haymakers fallen upon and dispersed the soldiers with wooden forks.

The tide of success now seemed to turn against our hero, and his hard life was making him prematurely old. He managed to secure a horse, passed a few days with a "pious priest," doubtless rigid in his devotions, and then retired for a month of cure to a most gloomy and dreadful cavern near the Cettina sources.\* Here he lived like the sick lion in its den, visited by all the wild beasts, that is to say the robbers and assassins, of the neighbourhood. He then collected a dozen Hajduks, amongst whom were two kinsmen; and the first captive was a Turk who had aided in the escape of his brother. The troop wished to slay him, but whilst Sosivizka was at his prayers—an exercise which he never omitted before meat, like the good brigand that he was—the brother allowed his saviour

\* Described by Fortes (ii. 85), and by Lovrich (pp. 9-13). It appears to me a "humbug"—only 180 paces long.

to escape, and pistoled a nephew, who, losing temper, struck him on the cheek. Thereupon the Hajduk kicked his brother out of the band, buried his nephew, and, disgusted with the affair, retired without followers towards his favourite Zermagna.

At this place he proposed to end his days in "holy peace," but the old Adam was again too strong. About the end of June 1769, he found himself at the head of eight followers, who wanted nothing but gunpowder. One of the number was sent to buy ammunition in the nearest town, and the rest lay down for a quiet *siesta* under a wood at the foot of Mount Prologh, in the Venetian territory. But a shepherd, who had been compelled to kill and roast one of his wethers, ran off to warn some forty Turkish soldiery who were collecting the taxes, and these Bashi-Buzuks, all reckless of the *jus gentium*, galloped across the frontier and attacked the bandits in their lair, easily killed three of them, not including the traitorous shepherd, and compelled the other five to disperse and fly. Great at this strait was the valour of a certain Stojan Xexogel,\* who, after tree'ing himself, killed a Turk and wounded four, when his ammunition was exhausted, and he followed his foes to the *numero de' più*. Sosivizka once more showed the remarkable *sangfroid* and "wide-awakeness" which distinguished him: he rushed towards the place where the firing was thickest, and escaped under cover of the smoke.

His next move was also a failure. The Ottomans gave out that they were about to march upon Montenero, where a certain Stefano Piccolo—"Stephen the Little"—had proclaimed himself Prince; and the Christians, fearing that the Infidels would once more treacherously occupy the Cettina country, marched all the territorial officers and troops of Sebenico to the frontier of Sign. This seemed a good opportunity for revenging the deaths of comrades who were dear to him; but the Hajduk had the displeasure of seeing his enemies turn directly towards Montenero. He then joined a band commanded by a certain Filippo Poovich, who afterwards adorned a gibbet at Zara. But fortune no longer smiled upon him, and he had serious thoughts of changing *rôle*, and becoming a government *employé*.

The next "disgusto" of the robber were two robberies practised upon himself. He had entrusted a sum of 500 sequins and a quantity of plunder to a certain caloger, his companion, who, foreseeing that his penitent was about to become an honest man, incontinently ran away with the spoils; and was pursued, to no purpose, by Sosivizka as far as the Danube. In the summer of 1776 a nephew from Imoski called upon him, and, during his absence, cleared out the house, carrying off a value of eighty sequins, including the "marama" of the Turkish "half-sister." The Bandit's biographer relates his pathetic complaint about these "cruel depredations" in the following words: "Is it just and right that two

\* In this day we should write it "Žeželj," and the French, "Jejeli;" it means a sheep-dog's stick-tether. The Italian "gl" is used for the liquid "lj," sounded "j."

petty larceners should walk off in complete safety with the booty which I took by force at the imminent risk of my life? Had they robbed me with arms in their hands, I should not have grieved. This would have been only tit-for-tat (*la pariglia*). But thus to plunder upon the strength of a good character, is the vilest thing in the world—we never can know what it is to trust a man!

This seems, however, to be the rule; as the miner who digs the gold has the least of it, so the thief is robbed by the receiver or the purloiner of stolen goods: it is, in fact, property *versus* labour, publisher *versus* author. Sosivizka, at the end of his career, after plundering caravans and butchering Turks, remained with only twenty sequins, the poor remnant of a poor six hundred. But he had generally spared the blood of Christians. On one occasion, when going his rounds with twenty-five companions, he met two Morlaks, whom he supposed to be spies; but, after examination, he found that they were carrying a large sum of money belonging to a merchant who had befriended him. He reproached them bitterly with their imprudence, fed them, and sent them away with an escort of his banditti, warning them that another time they might not fall into the hands of a Sosivizka. "This act," says his biographer, "shows not only a grateful heart; it also proves that the highwayman did not lean so much to filthy lucre as to the fame of valour (*bravura*)."

Moreover, the bad deeds of Sosivizka had borne good fruit; in this world men often *do* gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles. The Turks, who had rendered themselves intolerable by their contemptuous insults, and their violence, began to respect their Morlak neighbours. Some such considerations must have had due weight with the Austrian authorities, when they obtained the sovereign clemency for the Hajduk, caused him to be made a captain of Pandúrs, with an annual pay of twenty-eight sequins, and granted him a small farm. His I. M. Josef I., of Austria, in May 1776, whilst on a visit to the triple frontier, passed through Grazate, where the ex-Hajduk lived; asked him to relate his career, and graciously gave him a handful of sequins.

### Shakspeare's "Macbeth," and another.

LET us not be persuaded by the theatrical cant of the day that characters are created by the actor, not by the dramatist. Neither Kean, nor Macready, nor even Garrick himself, created Macbeth, but Shakspeare only. To whom we owe that other warrior, who before his first great crime was simple and honest, and after it was still brave and dignified, I cannot tell. Only it is clear to me that there are two Macbeths—one of Shakspeare, and another dear to the dramatic critic. Let us attend to the former.

What was Macbeth before he met the weird sisters; i.e. before he comes upon the stage? He was brave and a good fighter. If we did not learn this from the wounded soldier, we should infer it from that last flash of courage, which is roused by the taunts of Macduff when all hope is lost.

He was not pitiless. His wife, ready to be criminal for his glory, fears his nature—

It is too full o' the milk of human kindness,  
To catch the nearest way.

He was ambitious of bad ends, but hindered by scruples. She says—

Thou wouldst be great;  
Art not without ambition.

And again—

Wouldst not play false,  
And yet wouldst wrongly win.

It may be that he had confided to his wife some thought of supplanting the king, for she says that, when he broke the enterprise to her—

Nor time nor place  
Did then adhere, and yet you would make both.

Now at their first meeting on the stage he knows, and tells her, that time and place are made for him—

Duncan comes here to-night.

But whether this be so or no, Macbeth, before he met the witches on the heath, was no blunt and honest soldier, but one whose evil ambition was hindered by scruples, and whose little pity seemed great to the woman, who for his sake was pitiless.

What was he when he had heard the supernatural prophecies?—what is he as we see and hear him in the play? The three sisters have scarce