

the mining district of the Monte Argentario to Toplica, Prokoplje, and Niš. The whole journey took fifteen days in favourable weather. From Niš onwards the Ragusan caravans followed the great road to Constantinople or went to Bulgaria, where they had considerable trade and at least one colony at Vidin, in consequence of the privileges obtained from the Bulgarian Tsars.¹

Another much frequented caravan route was that which started at the mouth of the Narenta and passed through Bosnia and Servia. Ragusan goods were transported either wholly by sea round Sabbioncello or *via* Stagno to the little island of Osinj in the river delta, where a trading depôt was opened. Close by were several other depôts, the most important of which was the *Forum Narenti* (called Driva by the Slaves), with a large customs station, salt stores, and a Ragusan colony. Later it was supplanted by the Venetian castle of Gabela or Gabella.² The caravans travelled from the mouth of the Narenta through the land of Hlum, following the course of the river to Blagaj, the residence of the lords of Hlum (afterwards Dukes of St. Saba or the Herzegovina), above the spot where the river Buna springs full-grown from the rocks.³ The route continued up the Narenta valley, as the railway does to-day, past Konjica, which was to play an important part in later times, over the Ivan Pass to Visoko in the centre of

¹ For this route see Benedetto Ramberti, *Libri. Tre delle cosi dei Turchi*, lib. i.

² There is still a village of that name.

³ Mostar did not exist in the Middle Ages. The ruins of Blagaj still form an imposing mass.