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# The Unconquered Albania

*By*

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## PREFACE

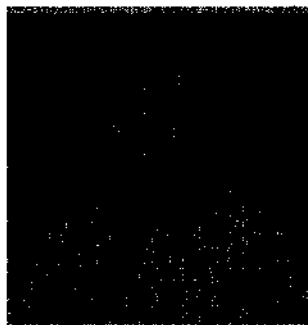
THERE are those people today who contend that a complete history of a country is too lengthy, too tedious and too statistical to hold the interest of the reader whose object is to gain a broad and not too complicated outline of a nation's history. However, within these pages the history of the Kingdom of Albania is gathered with the aim of giving to the reader a brief but concise glimpse without minimization of any of the highlights in the chronicling of events, into a unique nation which *is* of great interest as well as importance to the world but of which few know the intimate details of its making. While this booklet is full of precise historical data, gathered into as concise a form as possible, the author has not been a mere casual observer, but one, who through sincere endeavor and interest, has made a study of the country and the people and their distinctive customs.

In addition to the historical information herein contained, the author has given his own impressions of the country: the quaintness and originality of the people, the vivid and wild beauty of the mountainous regions, the peacefulness of the countryside emphasized by waving fields of green, the memorially historical spots, marked with ruins, where history has been made in the ceaseless flow of time, the progressive spirit of the towns, the advantages of location and many such intimate bits of information that will add interest and charm for the reader who finds great advantage in striding through strange and fascinating lands in seven-league boots!

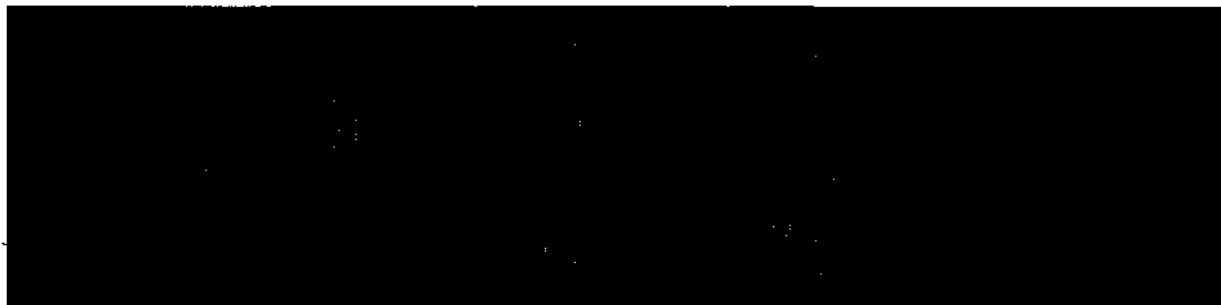
THE AUTHOR

May 13, 1935





HER MAJESTY THE LATE QUEEN MOTHER



Right to left: Their Royal Highnesses Princess Nafé, Princess Sémé, Princess Ruhijé,  
Princess Madjidé and Princess Muzejen, Sisters of His Majesty the King of the Albanians



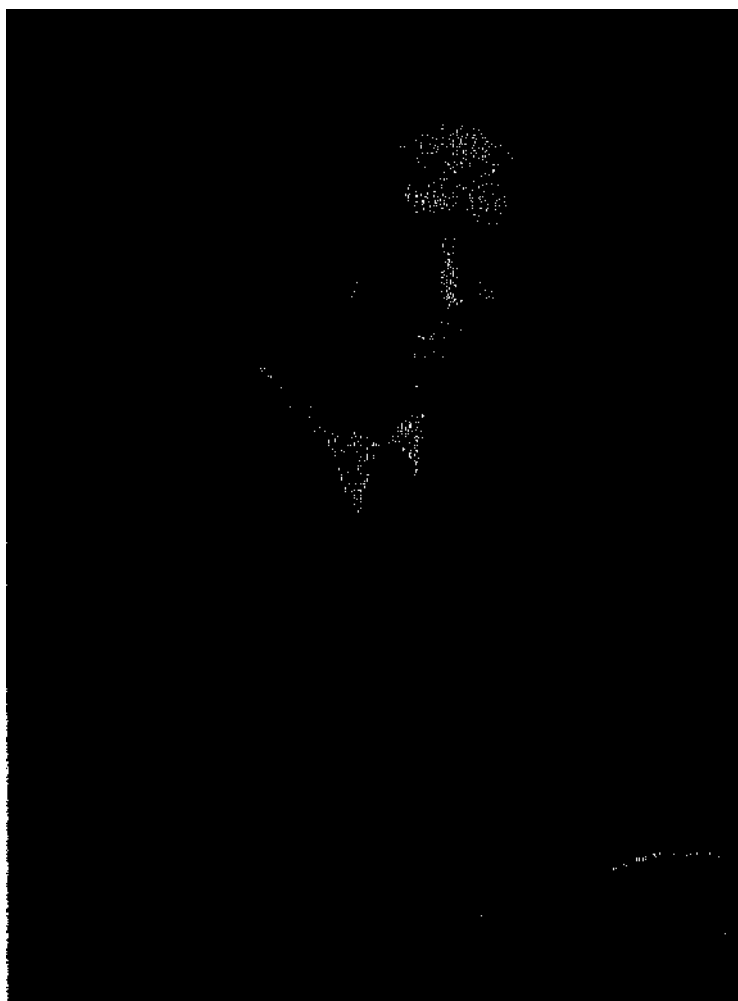
**The unconquered**

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HIS EXCELLENCY F. KONITZA  
Albanian Minister to the United States



## The Unconquered Albania

POETS, journalists, masters of finance, and lords of war have all had their fling at that nation which we know today as the Kingdom of Albania. Each, in his turn, has zealously tried to bend the thought of the world to his own conception of the situation and, without the slightest doubt, has had no small degree of success.

It is said that the forces of evil are always at work and that the noise which they make and the panoply of their bearing is always much greater than their position deserves. This most assuredly has been the case in the "Tragedy of the Balkans." The forces of iniquity have done all in their power to attempt to crush the great and unified national life existing in Albania. Even in this hour, when a unified Albania—under a most able leader, Zog I., King of the Albanians—strives for their well-deserved glorious future, the forces of viciousness are going about sowing seeds of unrest and maintaining veritable propaganda of diabolical untruths concerning Albania.

The writer, after attempting to assimilate that mountain of literature written on the question of the Balkans and Albania, feels that he has succeeded in bringing out of the maze something fair and just in its representation of existent facts.

Always interested in Southeastern Europe, we have found no place quite so romantic as Albania. No country has successively, from century to century, furnished the battleground for the Balkans, as has Albania. We have writers who tell us there is absolutely no form of culture or education in Albania; they would have us believe that the ancient Shkypetars are today savages, in approximately the same state of civilization as were the American Indians at the time when Christopher Columbus first touched the sands of San Salvadore, more than four hundred years ago. And still another group of writers, deeply obsessed by nationalism, has tried to prove why this or that nation should have control of Albania. It endeavors to put every other force in its worst light and convince us a world has banded together to drag Albania down to the very depths.

We wish to call the attention of the reader to the fact that Albania has kept pace with the rise of learning and culture in continental and central Europe and that she gave to the world men who were able not only to make a record for themselves, but likewise to take their place in the world of affairs, as recognized leaders of thought along with men of other nations of the earth.

Down through the centuries Albania's greatest scourge has been the fact that she was constantly used as the stage for the war-play of Southeastern Europe. One other factor which retarded the modern development of Albania, and which we will deal with later was the domination of the country by the Turks.

It is hardly necessary for us to say that no one who has lived through the last quarter of a century and kept abreast of the world affairs needs to be told of the treacheries, frauds as well as the cold-blooded cruelty and brutality, which, in Europe, ruler has used against ruler in order to gain possession of that small country in the Near East, Albania.

At the outset, however, we think it well to impress upon the mind of the reader the thought that Albanians are the only "Condottieri" left in Europe at the present time. They have been known and denoted by various names down

through the ages, but, perhaps, the one term best descriptive of their life and tradition is *Shkypetar*—sons of the eagle.

Also, it is most important to remember these people have behind them a glorious history of national development and a rather enviable heritage of folklore yet unknown to the civilized world.

It is a strange paradox, therefore, that their nation should have been the veritable greed of other rulers of Europe. It is most unfortunate, indeed, that their history, their customs, and their traditions should have been lost to the world in the din of battle and the spilling of blood.

The records of Albania, the ancient Epirus and Illyria, have all been too incomplete. The history of no government, no race, no people has been so filled with vicissitudes and trials as has that of this struggling nation in the western part of the Balkan Peninsula.

The Albanians, or Shkypetars, as they call themselves, inhabit the territory covered by ancient Epirus and the country of the Illyrians, a territory extending from the old Montenegro on the North to the gulf of Arta, or Ambracia, on the South, and from the coast of the Adriatic on the West to the central chain of the Pindus Mountains on the East, or, in other words, Albania is situated on the east coast of the Adriatic Sea, Southwest of Yugoslavia and North of Greece. Epirus is wild, mountainous and scenic; in fact, is the veritable Switzerland of the Balkans abounding in valleys of exceptional beauty and fertility. The ancient Epirots were as distinct from the Hellenes as the Albanians are from the modern Greeks. The Greek writers of ancient times referred to them as a Pelasgic race, or, in other words, the descendants of the aboriginal inhabitants of the country.

The Pelasgian Zeus has his memory, even today, in their language, for we find the Albanian word for God is "Zoti." A minute's examination of the terms "Grieg" and "Task" reveals that they are identical with "Truscus" or "Etruscus," while the form "Tyrrhcnus" perhaps survives in Tirana, the capital of the Kingdom of Albania, as no other explanation for the derivation of the name of the city can be found.

These Pelasgians formed a cluster of rude, rough, highland class, very similar to those of the Highlanders of Scotland a hundred and fifty years ago, brave, illiterate and essentially barbarian in character. Oftimes these clans and tribes were banded together in an independent government of a tribal sort. They even went farther and coalesced into little kingdoms of greater or lesser extent. In the times of the successors of Alexander the Great, Epirus made considerable progress in civilization, and its kings exerted no small degree of influence in the affairs of state of Eastern Europe. Pyrrhus, one of the last of these kings, was a man of the greatest ability and made an illustrious name for himself because of his learning and his statescraft, and, moreover, augmented the glory of his nation by reason of his executive ability. Among the bravest of brave, Pyrrhus did not hesitate to cross the Adriatic to aid in the defense of the Greek colonies of Southern Italy, Magna Craecia; neither did he hesitate to grapple with the rising power of Rome, and as a result, winning an honorable place for himself among the great commanders of the world.

In the year 168 before Christ, the Romans wreaked a terrible vengeance on Epirus, destroying seven towns and reducing one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants to slavery. This was the only time in the history of the race that the Epirots were ever thoroughly subdued. But even the Roman conquest wrought little change in their social customs. They still retained their own language, national customs and usages, and withal, remained a distinct and peculiar people.

The question as to whether the Albanians are genuine Epirots and Illyrians

or a new people formed by large and repeated infusions of barbarians from the North has been very much discussed. It was finally decided, upon evidence furnished by their language, which has been definitely determined a true representative of the ancient Illyrians, that the Albanians are the direct descendants of these ancient tribes, the Epirots and the Illyrians, who were neighbors and kindred tribes speaking different dialects of the same language; though, perhaps through the course of the ages, the Albanians may have become mingled, especially in the North, with other foreign elements.

Some ethnologists and students of the race and language declare with certainty that the Illyrian is one of the aboriginal races of Europe and that, if the term "Pelasgi" was ever used to designate a particular people, this must have been the race to which it referred. There is definite proof that their numerous tribes extended far into the North, even beyond the Danube, and this leads us to surmise rightfully that the Illyrians were the first branch of the Indo-European race to settle in Europe and were there long before the time of the Celts.

The old division between the Epirots and the Illyrians has its modern counterpart in the marked distinction between the Northern and Southern Albanians. For, as is brought to the attention of the traveller through Albania, there is a most evident dissimilarity between these two peoples, even to the extent of its manifestation in an ardent dislike of one for the other. Yannina, or, more correctly speaking, Ioannina, is the capital of Epirus, while Scutari—in Albanian language Shkodre—is the seat of the Northern Province.

In the course of her long history, Albania has been invaded by countless civilized, half-civilized and barbaric peoples. The Gauls, the Goths, the Romans, the Slavs, the Venetians, and, finally, the Turks successively invaded and obtained, for a time at least, a mastery over Albanian territory. But, watching the parade of the centuries down the corridors of time, we note with admiration that always Albania drove out or assimilated her invaders; perhaps conquered but invincible in her national individuality. So powerful the characteristics, so indelible the traditions, so adamant the customs, so appreciated the language of the Albanians that no remnant, not even the slightest trace of the numerous invasions can be found in Albanian life today. What the Roman and Greek historians recorded centuries ago concerning Albania so singularly applies to the actual conditions in the present time that the reader is almost led to believe that he is reading a modern history of Albania, that these ancient records are but contemporary accounts. The great historical events, as great and important as they were, served but to confine the Albanian to his mountain fastness, far from contact with higher degrees of civilization and apart from his immediate enemies and neighbors, and to constrain him to cling with tenacity to his national customs, language and traditions.

The Albanian people, then, present the unique and impressive phenomenon of a continuous national existence, which had its beginning many centuries before the coming of Christ and which has its integral life even at the present time.

In its beginning, the Kingdom of Illyria comprised the actual territories of Dalmatia, Croatia, Bosnia, Herzegovina and Montenegro, and Northern and Central Albania with a large part of modern Serbia. But in the course of its development, it extended all along the Eastern coast of the Adriatic Sea. Scutari was its capital just as it is now the capital of Central and Northern Albania.

The earliest known ruler of Illyria was Hyllus (The Star), whose death was recorded in 1225 B. C.

Illyria, however, reached the zenith of its expansion and development in the

fourth century B. C., when Bardhyllus (White Star) united under his seep Illyria, Molossia or Epirus and a large part of Macedonia. The decay beg under the same ruler as a result of the attacks made on the country by Phi of Macedonia, father of Alexander the Great. On the victorious conclusion the wars against Athens, Permenion, the Macedonian general, attacked and < feated the Illyrian forces between the lakes of Prespa and Ochrida, and recov ed that part of Macedonia that had been annexed by Bardhyllus.

Alexander the Great, on succeeding his father, continued the wars agaii the Ulyrxans. The Illyrian troops, under the command of Kleitos, son of Ba: hyllus, were subdued and joined in the expedition against the Persians. I Illyrian troops comprised a formidable unit in the forces of the conqueror the Persians and they shared in the triumph.

Upon the death of Alexander the Great, the Illyrians regained their freed< of action within their own domains, and in the year 232 B. C., the Illyri Throne was occupied by the enterprising Queen Teuta. She brought the Rom; in contact with the Balkans. The many destructive acts of her navy on the risi of commercial development forced the Romans to declare war against her. huge army and navy under the Roman Consuls, Gaius Fulvius Santumalus a Lucius Postumius Alvinus, attacked the central section of Illyria, and after t years of bitter warfare, Queen Teuta, in the year 227 B. C., sued for peace.

The last ruler of Illyria was Gentius, who was taken as captive to Rome.

Henceforth, Illyria became a Roman dependency. The country was divid into three independent republics with the cities of Scutari, Durazzo and D cigno as the capitals.

The Molossians claimed, according to Plutarch, to be descended from Pyrrh the son of Achilles, who settled in the country after the fall of Troy a transmitted his kingdom to his son, Molossus. Plutarch further relates tl Achilles was known in this country under the name of "Aspetos," which Albanian means "swift."

Molossia records a long line of rulers, the most eminent of whom v Pyrrhus of Eripus (272-295 B. C.).

Albanian tradition claims that the name "Shkypetar," meaning "Sons of J Eagle," is their rightful title, because the name "Albanian" is entirely forei to them. This title, "Sons of the Eagle", originated with Pyrrhus. It is relat that when the swiftness of his troops were praised, Pyrrhus proudly answer that this was natural, inasmuch as his soldiers were the sons of the eagle, th movement as the flight of the king of the birds. .

Subjection to Rome, however, *did* not mean that the Shkypetars were to go up all hope for independence.

Eventually Albania became the passageway for the Roman legions on th way to Asia. Embarking at Brindisi, the terminus of the Appian Way, tli were transported to Durazzo, continuing their journey on the Via Aegitana Egnatia, the road bed of which has been preserved to the present day.

On the whole, Roman influence in Albania had been of little importan Remains of Roman architecture and civilization may be seen throughout country, but the influence of Rome in shaping the course of Albanian domes culture or national life has been slight.

The closing days of the fourth century were the beginning of a dark peri< for in those days the barbarian forces poured over the Balkan Peninsula. I first to descend upon Albania were the Goths, who remained masters for century or more. In the year 535, Albania was redeemed by Justinian, a nat of Central Albania.

Invasion after invasion followed. The Slavs under Emperor Heraclius, ( Bulgarians under Tsar Simeon, and the Norman Conauest of 1081. under

leadership of Robert Guiscard, entrenched themselves *in* Albania. The Normans, it is believed, are responsible for the name of Albania, which name has been used ever since.

During the time of the Crusaders, Albania was a thoroughfare for the Crusaders of France and Italy. A record of this fact is to be found *in* Villehardouin's "Conquete de Constantinople/

When these invasions had subsided, there came into being three independent Albanian principalities. The Southern part of Albania was declared an independent principality by Michael Comnenus, a prince of the imperial family of Constantinople. He took up his residence in Yannina. It remained under his rule until 1318, when he was succeeded by the princes of the House of Orsini, who held sway until 1358.

Through the negotiations of the ruler of Southern Albania, a family alliance was made with Manfred, King of the Two-Sicilies and son of Frederick II., whereby Manfred married the daughter of Comnenus, and received as a dowry the cities of Corfu, Durazzo, Valona, Chimara, Butrinto and Berat. These cities were formed into the so-called Albanian Kingdom of the Angevin Princes. This kingdom existed until 1368.

At the battle of Kossova, in 1389, Albanians proved themselves valiant heroes. Of all the battles of the world, none was more bloody; the leaders of both armies were slain. Even prior to this date, however, in the early centuries, Albanians had distinguished themselves on the battlefield.

In the defeat of 1389 at Kossova, the Albanians, under the leadership of George Balsha, defied the arms of Islamism and entrenched themselves in the mountains. The Balsha family, said to be of French extraction and originating from Anjou, were previously the rulers of the Principality of Zeta, of which Scutari was the capital.

The year 1412 saw a new and formidable invader, the Turk, attacking Albania.

After the Turkish conquest, the Epirotic Kingdom was revived for a time by that renowned hero, Scanderbeg. Scanderbeg's father, John Castriota of Kruja, was the hereditary prince of a small district lying between the mountains of Epirus and the Adriatic. Under the heavy pressure of Bajazet I., he was forced to submit to the Turks, to pay tribute, and to surrender his four sons as hostages, the youngest son being George Castriota, later known as Scanderbeg (Skenderbeg). George's agility, military bearing and extraordinary intelligence attracted the attention of the Sultan, who caused him to be received into his imperial household, and educated him for military service. From this time on, he was known by his Turkish name—Iskanderbeg Prince—Lord Alexander in honorable reference to Alexander the Great. Early in life he won renown for his military exploits and was placed in command of a cavalry of five thousand soldiers.

Upon the death of Scanderbeg's father, John Castriota, Amurath II. caused the three elder sons of John Castriota to be put to death and privately seized the principality. Scanderbeg, he reasoned, was bound to him securely, but in this he was grossly deceived. Bitter thoughts of the seizure of the rightful belongings of his father and the underhanded murder of his three brothers filled the mind of Scanderbeg with a desire for revenge. So he bided his time, waiting for an opportunity to cast off his mask and declare himself the avenger of his family. This opportunity was not long *in* presenting itself; in the confusion following the defeat suffered by the Turkish armies in the war with Hungary, Scanderbeg took captive the fleeing Rejis Effendi, Minister of State, compelled him to sign an order directing the Governor of Kruja to surrender the city and fortress to Scanderbeg. The Turkish Governor, Sabel Pascha, obeyed the imperial order, and Scanderbeg became master of Albania.

His first act, as Albania's leader, was to renounce Islamism and proclaim him' self champion of the Christian faith. During this period of their history, the Albanians were all Christians. The Albanians upheld the standards of Scanderbeg, and with the aid of these loyal forces, Scanderbeg withstood the efforts of the Turks to regain possession of Albania for a period of twenty-three years. The story of Scanderbeg's coming to Kruja has been beautifully portrayed by the American poet, Longfellow, in his "Tales of a Wayside Inn."

The reign of Scanderbeg fills some of the brightest pages of Albanian history, and his indomitable spirit is to be known only through reading the stories of the innumerable battles waged under his command against the hordes of Amurath II and Mohammed II. With an army of not more than thirty thousand men, Scanderbeg was able to put up an invincible defense, and, thus, little Albania was soon the only remaining bulwark of Christianity in the civilized world.

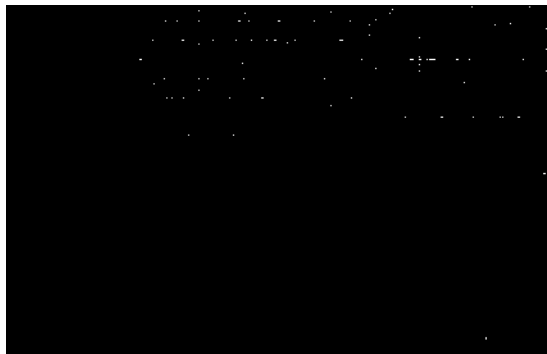
*Of all the records and traditions of wars upon this mortal plane, there have been none more glorious and spectacular than those of Albania, under the leadership of Scanderbeg. The records of glorious achievement are not excelled even by the much praised patriots of Marathon and Thermopylae. "A country that is set on a hill cannot be hid," so said a distinguished Albanian officer in referring to his native country. Albania's entire history in the annals of a long struggle against the Turks, and the history of her military achievements is a triumph of a mountain race against tremendous odds.*

Scanderbeg was, beyond all question, one of the greatest men of his time and deserving of a high place among the foremost of the brave Christian soldiers who finally checked the seemingly forever-victorious career of the Turks. But, finally, in the fullness of years and honors, the now old hero yielded up his life, in 1467, with a last request that his youthful sons be assured the friendly protection of the Venetians. After splendid and impressive funeral ceremonies in the Cathedral at Alessio, he was buried near the shimmering waters of the Adriatic. Strange irony that, during his lifetime he was able to ward off the Turks, but that, eleven years after his death, in 1478, the Turks should have seized his tomb and made of his burial place a superstitious veneration. They disturbed the bones of his mortal body, fashioning them into rings and amulets in superstitious hope that, through some unearthly spiritual alchemy, Scanderbeg's fortune might become theirs.

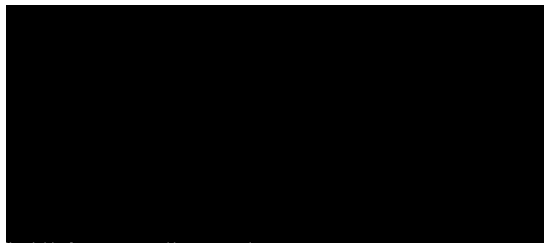
The bereaved Albanians have never ceased to mourn their leader and king. Even today the memory of this medieval hero-king, who added so many glorious pages to Albania's history, lives in the heart of the Albanian, even though many have since embraced Mohammedanism, which Scanderbeg abjured.

Upon the death of Scanderbeg, the Albanians dyed their jackets black, and black they remained through the ages in never ending mourning. Their traditional folklore told them that some day Scanderbeg shall return to them, walking upon the long beams of light from the sun rising across the jagged and altitudinous peaks of their own native mountains. Then, will the voices of these ancient Shkypetars be raised in one mighty and thunderous shout that will resound from peak to peak and be re-echoed down the quiet valley of their native land in glad heralding of the return of the leader.

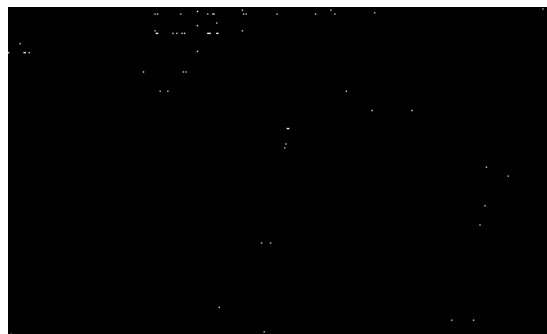
Scanderbeg willed his country to the Republic of Venice. Under her protectorate, Albania was able to withstand the rule of the Turks until 1501, when she again came under the rule of the Sultan, with the exception of several of her clans which remained essentially free and independent as before. The Paschalic of Scutari was bestowed on an Albanian from Bushat, who founded the line which reigned in Northern Albania until 1833. Berat, Yannina and other towns were the seats of the Paschas in Central and Southern Albania.



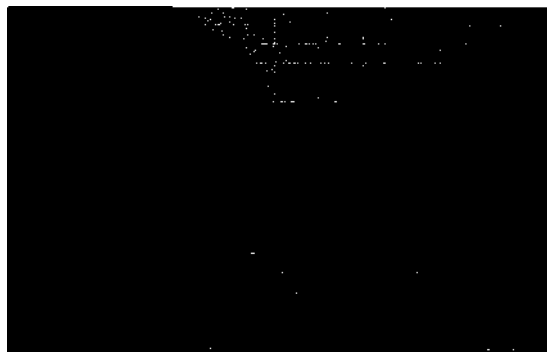
A View of Kruja with the Remains of the Palace of Scanderbeg  
in the Background



Elbasan



Albanians in Native Dress



Looking Up



Strangely enough, although the Turks were supposed to have complete control of Albania, yet the fact remains they were unable to appoint any provincial governor who was not a native Albanian, and who had not already established his arms and his force, as well as his policy and connections. It is noteworthy that the forbears of the present ruler, His Majesty King Zog I., King of the Albanians, were amongst those that would not yield their local autonomy to the Turks, and it is not surprising, then, that a son of Mati should rise to be the guiding star to pilot his people from bondage to freedom.

Near the close of the eighteenth century, under the leadership of the famous Ali Pascha of Yannina, Albania became again, for many years duration, the seat of a really independent power, in fact of sufficient importance to exert considerable weight in an influence upon foreign affairs. Ali Pascha never broke with the Sublime Porte so far as to declare himself independent, but his allegiance was little more than nominal. In fact, Constantinople regarded him with great fear and distrust and as a very dangerous man for Turkey. Early in 1820, Mahmoud II proclaimed Ali Pascha an outlaw and called upon the strength of the entire empire to destroy him. After two years siege Ali Pascha surrendered to Kurchid Pascha.

A period of comparative calm ensued, extending from this time to the outbreak of a revolutionary character in Northern and Southern Albania in 1835 and in 1847, respectively. These did not bring about any appreciable change in the nation, however, and so we come to the year of 1865, when the Sublime Porte took advantage of the existing situation in order to apply a new administrative system which had been especially formulated for Albania. By this new arrangement, Northern Albania, which had been forever a thorn in the side of the Sublime Porte, was carved into three provinces.

About 1870, the attention of the world was directed toward Albania and her part in world affairs. Great Britain proposed the institution of an administrative autonomy in such parts of Albania wherein peace and order had been restored.

The reaction against the continuous endeavor to encircle and suppress the Albanians, made its appearance in the form of an irredentistic movement, which made its first manifestations in 1878 by the formation of the League of Prizrend.

It was about the year 1880 that the Turkish Government relaxed the interdiction on Albanians, and national societies, with the object of furthering Albanian independence and political autonomy, arose. The particular work of these organizations was to re-awaken the dormant nationalism of the Albanians, to re-ignite the patriotism of the former centuries.

The coming into power of Abdul Hamid, surnamed the "Red Sultan," marked the beginning of the persecution of those engaged in the Albanian movement crystallized in these Albanian societies. His Grand Vizier was none other than Ferid Pascha, who, curiously enough, had a deep interest in Albanian politics. At this period, Prek Bib Doda, the head of the Mirdites, had been President of the National Albanian League. The Red Sultan's body-guard was composed of Albanian mountaineers. These positions of importance held by Albanians could not help but rebound to the aid of their country. Thus went forward the movement for independence and prepared the minds of the Albanians for those events which were to take place in the few crowded years just prior to the World War.

In 1908, the Red Sultan was informed that he must bow to the inevitable and promulgate the Turkish Constitution, and, thus, usher in the heyday of a new political life in the land of the Shkypetars. In the following year, the Red Sultan strove to overthrow the Constitution, but was frustrated by the Albanians. The Albanians delegated Essad Pascha to the task of informing the Sultan that

so far as Albania was concerned, he was dethroned. Although true that this self-government came all too late, for, alas, merciless fate had decreed that only the next day the tables should be turned on the Albanians by the intrigues of their neighbors, yet it was not all in vain and perhaps better late than never. Thus, a glorious chapter was closed in preparation for the sordid workings of the European and Balkan diplomacy in Albania.

In any discussion of the Albanian policy and the awakening of the dormant spirit of the Albanians, due consideration should be given to the Albanian National League, for it was the one great and dominant force that made for the re-arousing of the ancient Sons of the Eagle, the Shkypetars, to a full sense of their responsibility as loyal countrymen.

To possess a complete and just view of the Albanian question, it is necessary to turn back to the days of 1877 and 1878, the period of the great Balkan upheaval occasioned by the Russo-Turkish war. The Albanians were invited by the Montenegrins to join this war, but Albanians refused to participate in any conflict. With the close of the war, however, at the convening of the Congress of Berlin, Albania, as one of the oppressed nations, brought before that Congress a petition for the full recognition of Albanian nationality and political autonomy. It was this petition that caused the Iron Chancellor, Prince von Bismarck, when Lord Salisbury proposed that some attention be given the Albanian question, to cry out, "there is no Albanian Nationality."

As a result of the Congress of Berlin, Albania was divided quite generously amongst her neighbors, with little regard for national groups or local sentiment.

Not only was this arrangement contrary to the liking of the Albanians, but it was also grossly unfair; they registered a vigorous protest, which received no attention due to Prince von Bismarck's statement that there was no Albanian nationality. Not receiving any attention, the Albanians decided, if they were to have any sort of political autonomy, it must come through their own efforts. Thus, to promote the cause of the Albanians as a nationality and to sound to the world the clarion call of the desire of the Albanians for national independence and self-government, the Albanian League for the Defense of the Rights of the Albanian Nationality was organized with headquarters at Prizrend.

The first act of the League was to issue a protest against the parcelling out of Albanian territory.

By reason of the irresistible force of this League, the European powers who were signatories of the Berlin Treaty found it advisable, as well as necessary, to modify their original decision.

Space forbids us to go into details concerning the dealings between the Albanian League and the "Young Turks," which led up to the winning of Albanian autonomy. At one time, the "Young Turks" attempted to disarm the Northern Albanians, who, by the way, had been their one source of aid in the overthrow and dethronement of the Red Sultan. The loyal Albanians, equal to the occasion, did not bow to the apparently inevitable. In July, 1910, the Albanian chieftains met in Ferizovitch, where they decided that the crying need of the hour was autonomous administration. Insurrections followed, because of the failure of the "Young Turks" to accede to the wishes of the chieftains. Two attempts were made by the Turks to crush the Albanians; finally, they were, to all appearances, subdued, but no sooner had the Turkish armies withdrawn from Albania than the invincible Shkypetars rose again and once more sent forth their cry of defiance. The Albanians were repeatedly successful in the month of May, 1912. Southern Albania joined forces with the insurgents, and together demanded autonomy and recognition as a separate government. In the end, the Turkish regime surrendered to the demands of the unconquerable Albanians.

The concessions granted by Turkey, after cessation of hostilities, were surprising. Albania was recognized as an autonomous province, constituting four Albanian vilayets, namely, Monastir, Kossova, Scutari and Yannina; further, it was provided that these vilayets shall be ruled by native governors, in accordance with local customs and laws. There were many minor concessions, but a very important one was the fact that Turkey admitted that Albania was composed of four provinces. This was the first attempt to set a boundary line for Albania.

The Balkan question was one of the most delicate that has ever been presented to Southeastern Europe. When one reflects that, decade after decade, the Bulgarians and Serbs regarded Albania with ever jealous eyes and avaricious minds, and that the Albanians are, after all, a kindred people, one asks the question, why should not the Albanians be able to rule their own land like their brothers in blood?

The recognition of the autonomy of Albania was an event that stirred the Balkans to the very depth, for it signaled the advent of a new political power in the Balkan Peninsula. There resulted two major effects of this act; namely, the balance of power was consequently immeasurably disturbed; and, secondly, with an autonomous regime in the four western vilayets, which were formerly under Turkish rule, all thought of expansion, so far as the Balkan States were concerned, was automatically barred.

By the provisions of the Balkan Alliance, the whole of Albania was distributed among several signatories with no regard to the rights, wishes or prerogatives of Albania. More than that, they paid no attention or exhibited any regard for the rights of Albanian nationality, nor gave a passing thought to that which is termed international morality. What sordid travesty, what an unpardonable sin was committed in the name of the Balkan Alliance. Nevertheless, when Albanian autonomy became a reality, the revenge of justice was destined to be hurled upon their own heads.

The Balkan Allies, with the cries of the frenzied multitudes still ringing in their ears, proceeded to a dastardly piece of diplomacy, in that they demanded that the Sublime Porte grant Macedonia an autonomous government such as had been given Albania. When their demands were refused by Turkey, they next set about to find some other small nation that might be used as the "cat's paw" or "the agent provocateur" to do the bidding of the Balkan Powers in the enacting of their sordid little drama.

Before a reply could be received from Turkey, Montenegro was compelled to march its army upon the Turkish forces, without so much as a formal declaration of war. Hostilities began officially on October 8, 1912, but Greece did not enter into the conflict until ten days had elapsed. This war was a complete surprise to the Albanians, as also it was to the rest of the world. There was a great deal of doubt in the minds of many as to the degree of good faith and sincerity to be expected from the Allies, however, the important fact was that Albania had been driven to the wall and made to face the crucial test. The Balkan States were repeatedly successful in their military operations and threw the Turks into a wild and disorderly retreat. Albania did not join the attack upon the Turks during the Balkan upheaval of 1878. As a result of such refusal the whole of Albania was placed under the command of Balkan military leaders, with one exception in the fortress of Yannina. Central and Northern Albania fell into the custody of the Montenegrins and Serbians, while Southern Albania was under the control of the Greeks. Forthwith, Albania was treated as a conquered nation, and the occupation was considered a permanent one. The Serbians, having entered Durazzo, made a laughable play of their chauvanistic policy.

Upon seeing the waters of the port, their cavalry corps rushed into the shallow waters, crying out "Long Live the Serbian Sea!"

The Albanians were not easily beguiled by wily statesmen, especially when they happened to be Balkans. Even though the darkness of abject slavery seemed to have descended upon them, even when an autonomous Albania seemed but an unsubstantial dream, all this did not prevent them from banding together in a brave effort to defend their own. Only a miracle would be their salvation, and, by Divine Providence, a miracle man arose in the person of Ismail Qemal Bey Vlora of Valona, an old Albanian leader, who volunteered to use all of his power to bring about the redemption of Albania.

At the beginning of the Balkan invasion Ismail Qemal Bey Vlora was in Constantinople, where he was tendered a seat in the Turkish Ministry, which, by the way, had for its sole purpose the annexation of Albania to the cause of Turkey. However, he refused the offer that he might better devote his time to the interests of Albania.

Being apprised of the invasion, he resolved to save Albania by a "coup de main." Hurriedly leaving Constantinople to preside over a meeting of Albanian leaders at Bucharest, where he received much advice as to the wisest procedure in the matter, he at last arrived in Albania accompanied by a few friends and advisors. His first act was to call together at Valona a meeting, and as a direct result thereof, on November 19, 1912, the national emblem, symbolized in a flag bearing the double-headed black eagle of Scanderheg, was flown above the city. Directly afterwards came the formal declaration of independence. A provisional government was established with Ismail Qemal Bey Vlora as its president, and a Provisional National Assembly was commissioned to take care of the enactment of a series of laws for the welfare of Albania.

About this time it came to light that Austria and Italy had been concerned as to the future of Albania as far back as the year 1900, at which time they entered into an agreement guaranteeing the integrity of Albania, if and when the Turkish Empire be dismembered and Albania assume the position of an independent nation.

This agreement was not generally known to exist, and, in truth, came about through an interchange of notes between the two countries, taking place on the eve of Italy's acceptance of her place in the Entente as against the League of the Central Powers. Some reference is made of this agreement in the Italian Green Book of 1914-1915, and is contained in the seventy-first document of the Green Book. The exact text of the formal agreement is not universally known and, to the knowledge of the writer, has not been published. There is some question in regard to whether Ismail Qemal Bey Vlora had any knowledge of the existence of such an agreement, although his actions would indicate a strong supposition that he was cognizant of it.

The natural curiosity of the reader will undoubtedly lead him to wonder why these two Great Powers felt the necessity of such an understanding in regard to a small country. This *is* rather clearly explained in the declaration of Count Tittoni, Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs, made, in the Italian Chamber of Deputies, on May 14, 1904:

'The proper value of Albania resides in her ports and in her sea-coast, the possession of which would mean for either Italy or Austria, the incontestable supremacy over the Adriatic Sea. This is what Italy would never allow Austria to obtain, nor Austria, Italy; but in the event that either one of these States should seek to appropriate for itself that region, the other ought to oppose it by all available means.'

Thus, it is easily comprehended that, while these two Great Powers might oppose each other in the control of Albania, yet they would unite against a

third State, attempting to launch a campaign of expansion at the expense of Albania.

Throughout all these happenings, Austria was considerably worried as to just what was transpiring in Albania and as to the movements of the Balkan troops. The Austrian High Command was even more concerned, because of interest in the Balkans occasioned by reason of membership in the Teutonic Alliance and the accompanying problems of the Bagdad railway project and the "Drang Nach Osten" policy. When the Balkans evidenced that they had no intention of relenting in their advance upon Albania, Austria mobilized her forces with the apparent resolve of waging war with Serbia and Montenegro. Italy, though momentarily not disposed to proceed to such extent, nevertheless, felt it was necessary that she join forces with her ally, Austria, in order to restrain the Greeks and Slavs from descending upon the shores of the Adriatic and crushing Albania.

Russia had been striving to gain a foothold in Albania through the Slav element in Scutari, an element so small as to be almost negligible. Her work, therefore, was ineffective, in that a tiny church and school was all she could hope to fill, and that was scarcely sufficient for the materialization of her intended project.

From what has gone before it is obvious that the Great Powers had, for a quarter of a century, been collecting material that would serve as inflammable tinder and succeed in inaugurating a great world conflict, the result of which we all know only too well. It became clear that, unless Serbia and her allies curbed their attack upon Albania, Austria would rise against Montenegro and Serbia, Italy would resort to arms against Greece, while Russia would rush to the assistance of the Slav nations by declaring war upon Austria; Germany, in turn, would make common cause with her allies, Austria and Italy, while France would join her ally, Russia. Thus, the time came when the crux of the situation rested in the hands of Great Britain and the man who directed the destinies of her foreign policy at that time, Sir Edward Grey.

It was this statesman who proposed that all Ambassadors of the European Powers accredited to the Court of St. James form a Conference, which would decide the fate of Albania, as well as the right of Serbia to a commercial outlet in the Adriatic Sea. This Conference now known as the Conference of Ambassadors, was composed of the representatives from the six Great Powers and held its first formal meeting at the British Foreign Office, on December 17, 1912.

Three days later, the following statement was issued by the Foreign Office:

"The Ambassadors have recommended to their governments and the latter have accepted in principal Albanian autonomy, together with a provision guaranteeing to Serbia commercial access to the Adriatic Sea. All six governments have agreed in principal on these points."

This agreement averted an armed conflict between the Great Powers.

Thus was inaugurated the official existence of an independent Albania.

It is clear that the Great Powers were conscious of acting under the stress of the time in an effort to avoid a general state of war. For once justice and equity were forced to give way to expediency. Later developments, however, demonstrated that what the Ambassadors had in mind was not the formation of a sound and strong Albanian Principality, but rather the establishment of a sort of *modus Vivendi*. This was later modified to some extent in the naming of Prince of Wied as ruler of the country. In passing, it is well to know that the view on the Albanian questions held by the Great Powers was neither unknown nor unappreciated by the eminent statesman who presided over the

Conference of Ambassadors. In fact, upon being questioned in the House of Commons concerning Albania, Sir Edward Grey replied that not too much was to be expected from the Conference and further stated: "the primary essential was to preserve agreement between the powers themselves."

Finally the Conference of Ambassadors reached some unanimous decision as to the future status of Albania and agreed upon some general provisions concerning the new State. One very important decision was that which recognized Albania as an independent and sovereign nation, to be governed by a European prince chosen by the Great Powers; and, perhaps still more important, this new nation was to enjoy perpetual neutrality under the combined protection of the Great Powers. The Great Powers were to be represented in Albania by an International Commission, which would exercise a kind of guardianship over the nation and which would be empowered to control the finances of the country and check the government in case of its procedure beyond the limits of its jurisdiction. This International Commission of Control comprised one delegate from each of the Great Powers and one Albanian representative.

We will not pause long for a discussion of the Scutari Crisis, except to say that the Conference of Ambassadors had scarcely drawn the boundary lines to the Northeast, the Albanian-Montenegrin-Serbian frontier, than a new war crisis appeared in the offing, none the less serious than that of the preceding November. After a great deal of debate the Great Powers decided to occupy the city of Scutari, and, on May 13, an international contingent of marines entered Scutari. At this time Scutari was governed by Vice-Admiral Cecil Burney.

Of the provisional government, which was operating at this time, we wish to point out that it received its authority by the proclamation of independence of November 19, 1912, and this status was confirmed, in December, 1912, by the Conference of Ambassadors, having taken cognizance thereof.

The official title of the new government was "The Provisional Albanian Government" and was placed under the presidency of Ismail Qemal Bey Vlora and the vice-presidency of Monsignor Nicholas Kachori, Catholic Prelate of Durazzo.

The territory over which they ruled was unique because of its miniature size. Their jurisdiction extended about a stone's throw from Valona, and the funds necessary for the support of any government were sadly lacking. The principle work of this government was to uphold the Albanian cause and defend the rights of the people. However, the government was a virtual prisoner within the walls of Valona and was exposed to the machinations of the Balkan intrigues. To the North of Valona were the troops of Serbia, to the South those of the Greeks, and to the East, barely twenty miles from the city, was the ubiquitous Djavid Pascha, avowed destroyer of Albania. To complete the vicious net that the Balkans hoped to cast about the new Albania, the sea was blocked by a Greek squadron.

By April of the year 1913, the territory of the provisional government had been enlarged by the addition of territories in Central and Northern Albania evacuated by the Serbian troops. The government then proceeded to establish in these areas local authorities patterned and based upon the "Organic Law of Albania."

One of the great sins of the Conference of Ambassadors and the International Commission of Control was the evil of procrastination, in which both indulged. Had a ruling prince been appointed shortly after the Conference of Ambassadors drew to a close, it would not have presented so difficult a problem to the new ruler destined to take up the reigns of the government where the provisional government left off.

The Boundaries Commission was beguiled at an early date by the craftiness

of the Greeks. In their zeal to present to the Commission only a Greek-Speaking people, those inhabitants, who spoke only the Greek tongue were allowed to appear on the streets during the convening of the Boundaries Commission. In places where there happened to be none who spoke the Greek language, Greek colonists and refugees were imported from Asia Minor for the express purpose of impressing the commission with the existence of a Greek-Speaking population in Albania. During this period those inhabitants not speaking Greek were confined to their premises under guard. Stores and all buildings boasted a new coat of paint *in* the traditional Greek colors, white and blue; moreover, a fact which would be ludicrous if it were not so significant of the apparently forever unsuccessful struggle of Albania to achieve her nationalism, was the fact that even the populace was forced to appear in blue and white apparel. These were only a few of the extreme measures resorted to by the Greek Government in order to impress the Boundaries Commission.

In the meantime, many events were transpiring which indicated the negligence in appointing a ruler was proving fatal to the Albanian cause.

Austrian bankers had assembled for the formation of the National Albanian Bank. But the Boundaries Commission delayed for a month in Monastir, where it accomplished nothing. The Albanians were becoming impatient of results and, more than that, suspicious that their provisional government was much too conservative. There was a feeling in certain quarters that Greece would never relinquish possession of Southern Albania. In the midst of all this, Ismail Qemal Bey Vlora notified the Great Powers of his inability to cope with the situation and besought them to make immediate arrangements for the establishment of a ruling prince at the head of the government, as that alone would restore the confidence of the people in the benevolence of Europe.

After more delay and further quibbling, it was at last officially announced, on December 3, 1913, that Prince William of Wied was elected as the Sovereign Prince of Albania.

On March 7, 1914, Prince William of Wied and his consort landed at the port of Durazzo from the yacht "Taurus," which was surrounded by battle-ships and destroyers of the Great Powers. His arrival was greeted with viciferous rejoicing on the part of the population.

From the very first Prince of Wied was destined to encounter innumerable difficulties, difficulties inherited from the Conference of Ambassadors and the International Commission of Control, an unfortunate inheritance for both Albania and himself. At the outset the Conference of Ambassadors had failed to settle the question of the boundary lines of Southern Albania. It had appointed a Commission of Boundaries, to be sure, but this commission had dallied in Monastir and been sadly duped by the agents of Greece. It became evident that it was nothing short of a fiasco to give to Prince of Wied the reigns of the Albanian Government while the southern provinces were still in the hands and under control of an irresponsible "brigandesque camarilla." This was one of the momentous problems that was to cause Prince of Wied a great deal of trouble and, later, cost the lives of thousands of innocent human beings.

Affairs in Albania had scarcely returned to normalcy when again the principality was thrown into a state of ferment and confusion by a small agrarian revolt in Central Albania. The Albanian Government had the whole situation well in hand and would have been successful were it not that certain foreign newspaper correspondents sent the false alarm to Durazzo that the rebels were arriving at the gates of the city. This caused the populace to rush frantically to ships lying in the harbor, while the prince failed to gain his point in the hill country in an effort to save the city itself. By means of intrigue, it was not long until the whole of Central Albania was *in* a state of revolt.

While negotiations were being carried on with the rebels, it was next to impossible to bring a state of quietness and normalcy to a populace that had so many times suffered gross betrayal. Through intrigue, Italy proceeded to negate anything that Austria might suggest to restore the balance of power, and, at last, the Prince of Wied found himself unable to staunch the stream of violence and confusion, or bring under his control the forces at the bottom of the mad uproar.

In the meantime, the Greeks took advantage of the situation in Central Albania and completed the devastation of Southern Albania, thereby violating the Treaty of Corfu. An attempt was made through the necessary diplomatic channels to expel the Greeks from Southern Albania and to strengthen further the government at Durazzo. Just at this time, however, there resounded throughout the world the ominous report of the assassin's gun, which felled the Austro-Hungarian Crown Prince, Archduke Francis Ferdinand, and the World War, with its dire consequences, was imminent. In this deadly and all-including conflict, the Albanian problem was forgotten.

At the end of a most troublesome six months rule, on September 3, 1914, Prince of Wied and his family embarked upon the Italian yacht "Misurata," and set sail for the Wied estates on the Rhine.

Before he left, however, he returned his commission to govern Albania to that body from which he had received it—The International Commission of Control. It is of interest to note that this Commission even though vested with the authority and prestige of the Great Powers, nevertheless, could fare no better than the Prince of Wied, for with the opening of the World War most of the delegates of the Great Powers to the Commission had been recalled by their respective governments.

Essad Pascha Toptani, formerly Minister of War under the Prince of Wied Government, not only betrayed the Prince of Wied but also conspired against him and Albania's independence, now taking advantage of the sad state of affairs, returned to Albania and set up a government of his own, but this was not to be stable. The Greeks re-entered the Southern part of Albania in November, 1914, and on Christmas Day of the same year, Italian troops landed at Valona, declaring that they had come to uphold the rights of Albania and safeguard its interests. Later French troops came to the outskirts of Korcha, and finally entered the city and acknowledged the "Autonomous Albanian Province of Koritsa." The Albanian flag was hoisted and the French troops accorded it the usual honors.

On June 3, 1917, Italy officially declared that it was one of her aims to re-establish the independence and integrity of the Albanian State. On that day the occupation of Southern Albania by Italian troops having been completed, General Ferrero, Commander of the Italian occupation forces, read a formal proclamation before a large gathering of Albanian notables at Arghyrocastro, the erstwhile seat of the autonomous Epirus Government.

Thus came the dawn of a new era for the land of Scanderbeg the Great.

The Albanians pleaded their cause before the Peace Conference in Paris, but here there were too many divergent interests rivalling with each other; France, Greece, Italy and Yugoslavia—each of these powers pursuing its own ambitions when deliberating the Albanian question, and none of them gave thought to help Albania and her sacred rights. Two entire years were spent in fruitless discussions, but even when a partition of Albania began to be seriously considered, a profound emotion was shaking Albania and the people's patience had reached its lowest ebb.

At this period, there emerged into national prominence, a youthful and

dramatic personality who was destined to be the modern saviour of his country. A princely youth of twenty-five, Ahmed Bey Zogu, was one of the outstanding Albanians who might be trusted to lay the foundation of a new Albania.

Upon the initiative of Ahmed Bey Zogu, the Albanian leaders called a Congress at Lushnja in 1920, to form a provisional government and to draw up a Constitution. While orders had been given to the army of occupation to prevent any national movement, these same soldiers realized that the presence of Ahmed Bey Zogu, with his deadly sharpshooters from Mati, his birthplace, at this Congress put a different aspect on the situation. This youthful national champion rose in that meeting and pledged himself to protect the Congress even at the cost of his life. His courageous demeanor, masterful manner and methodical movements at once impressed all present. The delegates, unhampered by fear, proceeded to form a regency of four members, and a Cabinet, under the Premiership of Sulejman Bey Delvina, was elected, in which Ahmed Bey Zogu was named Minister of Interior, and a new delegation was sent to Paris to plead Albania's cause.

Thus from obscurity, a guiding star rose from out of Mati, which was to extend its rays of erudition and calmness over an entire nation that had yearned through the centuries for a lasting peace.

Ahmed Bey Zogu, as Minister of Interior, displayed so much energy and circumspection, that within short time tranquility and security were completely established throughout the nation. Thus all pretext for the foreign powers to continue maintaining garrisons in Albania were eliminated, and such armed forces had to be withdrawn. The last foreign regiments on Albanian soil were those in Valona, withdrawn rather reluctantly by Italy. The gendarmerie and the militia were reorganized and a strong foundation of civil administration was successfully laid. A public loan was floated with great success; Parliament convened; Albania's independence was recognized at the Peace Conference in Paris, and this was followed by Albania's admission to membership in the League of Nations, thereby crowning with triumph the efforts of the first act on the stage of the political life of Albania.

The various political parties, represented in the Albanian Parliament, were showing a very intense activity, and great emotions, liberated from age-old chains, were indulging in unrestrained vehemence. This way the various Cabinets succeeded each other in rapid succession, but without any exception. Ahmed Bey Zogu, having given such remarkable proofs of his organizing capacities and unselfish patriotism, held a seat in all of them.

Prime Minister Sulejman Bey Delvina was succeeded by two Cabinets under the Premiership of Elias Vrioni, who was replaced by a coalition-government, called the "Sacred Union,"<sup>1</sup> headed by Pandeli Evangheli, who was succeeded by a Cabinet, lasting four days, under Hassan Prishtina, who made way for a provisional government under Idomene Kosturi and thereby paving the way for the Xhafer Ypi Cabinet, which was of greater stability and longer duration. In most of these Cabinets, Ahmed Bey Zogu held Ministerial portfolios, but in all Cabinets he was actually its soul and leading spirit.

These first years of stabilization could not pass without certain frictions from within and without. Conflicts on the Greek and Yugoslav borders, principally caused by the artificial delimitations, which had been fixed on many points contrary to natural geographical and ethnographical conditions, absorbed a great amount of force and attention, which otherwise could have been used to much more fertile purposes. On the other hand, the uneasiness and instability, aroused by these more or less serious troubles were exploited by political gamblers from within and from abroad; personal jealousy combined with differences in politics were creating interior troubles, at times very grave. The seditious move-

ment of March, 1922, was one of the more dangerous cases of this kind. During this entire period, full of difficulties and great anxieties, it was due only to Ahmed Bey Zogu's extraordinary qualities as a statesman, political leader and to his inexhaustible energy, that Albania succeeded in overcoming the infantile diseases of its first days of independent political life without any serious consequences.

On December 2, 1922, Ahmed Bey Zogu took over the Premiership from Xhafer Ypi, who was elected a member in the Council of Regency.

The government leaned chiefly on the conservative parties, who called for a quiet and systematic way in the execution of reforms and who were for avoiding any political adventure in reference to foreign relations with Greece and Yugoslavia by giving up all irredentistic tendencies, preferring peace and tranquility. Whereas, their opponents favored radical proceedings, which in certain points, as on the question of agrarian reforms, ran very close to communism; with regard to the territories given away to Greece and Yugoslavia by decision of the Great Powers, they believed in a strong and inflexible policy directed towards recovery of the lost provinces even at the peril of a new war. Ahmed Bey Zogu succeeded very skillfully for some time in manoeuvring between these two charged currents, but finally he resigned, when on February 23, 1924, an unsuccessful attempt to shoot him, during a session of Parliament was made by a fanatic student. He was succeeded by Shefqet Verlaci, who became Prime Minister, but Ahmed Bey Zogu continued to maintain his influence in the course of politics which he had initiated and directed until now.

Unscrupulous agitation and arguments, calculated to stir the instincts of the thoughtless masses, taken among the people by demagogues, finally let loose a new revolution, which proved to be quite serious. The revolutionary movement, led by Fan Noli (Theophan Stylian Noli), a priest of the Greek-Orthodox Church, who managed to gain sufficient prestige to launch this mysterious revolution in June, 1924.

Theophan Stylian Noli claims that he was born in a small village near Adrianople, called Ibrik'Tepi. In 1901 he was an actor in Athens, and in 1904 became schoolmaster in a village in the interior of Egypt. In 1908 he was already an Eastern Orthodox priest in Boston, and founded the Christian Albanian Church in Boston with the aim of separating the Albanian Church from the Greek Orthodox Patriarchate in Constantinople.

For a time it seemed that the destiny of Albania was in the hands of Fan Noli, but fate dealt out strange verdicts and Fan Noli was found out. His extravagant promises he made to his supporters and to the army were impossible to fulfill. In his role as leader, he was looked to as the one to settle the agrarian question, but he was unable to produce any beneficial results. His fatal blunder, however, was in petitioning the League of Nations for the loan of huge sums of money for Albania. His manner of presenting the request displayed an utter lack of diplomacy, sincerity, tact and understanding, and many members of the League looked upon him with an eye of suspicion, while others were deeply offended at his action. The final blow came when he showed his true attachments and inclinations toward communism by entering into diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia and according recognition to a Soviet Russian Minister with a large staff, who were to use the Albanian capital Tirana, as a center for Soviet propaganda in Europe. Fascist Italy and conservative England frowned upon Noli's policy. They could not properly tolerate sovietism in Albania, where about ninety-five per cent of the inhabitants were land-owners, who were most reluctant to submit to the radical experiments of Noli. With the continued growth of unrest and discontent, revolt gained

headway while Noli's political drama waned and he was forced to make his exit in undignified haste.

Noli later founded an Albanian communist newspaper in Geneva called the *Liria Kometare*, subsidized by Russia. In 1927 Noli signed a Bolshevik manifesto intended to bring about a revolution in Albania and all Balkan States uniting them into a federation of Soviet Socialist Republics. Thereafter he settled in Hamburg and tried to organize the Albanians living in the United States. With a League of Nations passport Noli toured the United States in May, 1930, and thereafter continued his activities in Vienna, but returned again to the United States in 1932 and upon protests filed by the Society of American Friends of Albania he was detained at Ellis Island. Now, Fan Noli, so long King Zog's bitterest and most unjust opponent, is ill and in poverty in America, and at the end of 1933 applied to King Zog for help. The King in his generous way sent financial help, without any conditions attached, and Noli realized his erring ways by voluntarily having declared by written statement that King Zog is a great unselfish leader as he so ably proved himself to be for Albania. Noli further declared that he is retiring from politics and would from now confine himself to the church and to literary activities.

On Christmas evening of 1924, Ahmed Bey Zogu won over the considerate and intelligent elements of the population. He entered Tirana and was greeted by the whole town with shouts of cheer and gratitude and was hailed as the leader who would direct Albania into a peaceful and prosperous future. As soon as harmony and tranquility had been restored, the young chieftain called upon the Albanians for the election of a Constitutional Assembly, which body declared Albania a republic in January, 1925, and the Albanians showed unwavering loyalty by electing, on January 31, 1925, Ahmed Bey Zogu as their first president.

The new president studied the needs, requirements and the psychology of his people. He was determined to profit by the numerous blunders of Fan Noli, and, thus, he won the support and admiration of the strongest and sturdiest clans of Albania. These clans, which had never paid taxes to the Sultans of Turkey, now began to pay taxes to the government a further sign of their loyalty, they laid down their arms; returned to their homes and their farms, thoroughly convinced that the new president will safeguard the interests of the nation.

Through his highly developed penchant for law and order, Ahmed Bey Zogu won the support of the Beys. Until this time the Beys of Albania were too proud to unite under another Bey as their chief. They had engaged in petty quarrels and waged war against each other like the Barons of medieval England. The firm hand of Ahmed Bey Zogu tended towards forming them into a national union, and they accepted Ahmed Bey Zogu as their chief and president.

In reaching these ends, Ahmed Bey Zogu proved himself a magnet rather than an autocrat or tyrant. In his way he has given ample evidence to his people that his chief aim in life, and his only objective is to put Albania on an equal rank with other civilized nations.

The peak of his success was reached on September 1, 1928, when, upon the acclamation of his subjects, Albania was declared a kingdom and he was proclaimed the King of the Albanians, under the title of King Zog I.

King Zog's rise to the throne of Albania is in keeping with the psychology of the Albanian people. In this rugged country, the idea of a king has taken very deep root, and in the mind of the Albanian no president can fill the places occupied by King Pyrrhus, Alexander the Great and Scanderbeg the Great. These kings, according to tradition, were Albanians.

Under King Zog I, Albania has been making steady progress toward modernization of such magnitude that it can be favorably compared to that promoted by President Kemal of Turkey. A civil code, modeled upon that of France, abolished polygamy, and instituted state control over marriage, divorce and education. A new penal code, based on the Italian example, took the place of the ancient Ottoman code. The promotion of national consciousness is pushed ahead by the use of a common language in which school-books, newspapers and literary works have to be printed, substituting for the local dialects. The law of agrarian reform of 1930 lays the foundation for the creation of a nationally inclined class of small peasant proprietors. The stability of the country has been further promoted by the pacification of the outlying districts. In foreign policies, King Zog is for peace and true friendship equally with all nations.

It is evident that the golden opportunity for Albania has arrived. Under the able guidance of King Zog I., Albania is being restored to all of those things which were hers from the days of antiquity. It must be realized that a nation that could retain all of its native customs, its folklore, and its nationalistic trend, even under oppression and cruel domination from without, must live on through the centuries to see her wrongs righted and her grievances redressed. The avowed desire of the many tribal units to be united in one great mother country is so self evident that there is no need for any plebiscite. The Albanian loves his farm land, and, after many centuries of warfare, is anxious to settle down into the occupation of peace. He is willing to beat the proverbial sword of war' fare into the plowshare and to begin to build constructively for his descendants that they may enjoy the blessings of peace and happiness, the heaven-sent attributes of every law abiding citizen and nation on the face of the earth.

And, thus, today Albania is a consolidated State and a most valuable member of the great family of western nations.

#### PHYSICAL FEATURES

Albania, situated on the east coast of the Adriatic Sea, southwest of Yugoslavia and north of Greece, two hours distant from Rome by aeroplane, has an area of about 11,000 square miles—30,540 square kilometers—measuring 220 miles in length and 95 miles in width. The larger part of the country is mountainous; amongst the geographical and geological divisions of the country the most familiar are roughly as follows: Northern Albania consisting principally of mountains; Central Albania, between the Mati and the Viosa rivers, is comprised of littoral plains; Southern Albania is mountainous to the greater extent.

The seashore is almost entirely flat and sandy; only in its southern regions limestone rocks, approaching the sea and combining their picturesque contours with the lavish beauty of the vegetation, create scenery of the highest charm and attraction. The mountains rise to a height of more than 6,000 feet and delight all lovers of Alpine beauty, these are partially covered with many magnificent old forests, most of them yet unexplored, and here and there the wild bareness of the Karst makes its appearance. The many rivers, their beds deeply cut into the rock, gorges and ravines, roaring cascades add to the wildness and savageness of the landscape.

Agriculture and cattle raising are the principal occupations, with olives, the making of olive oil, grains and tobacco being the principal products of the country. But there is great mineral wealth (asphalt, arsenic, copper, iron, lead, lignite, naphtha, oil, and other mineral resources), which is largely yet undeveloped, and with time, possibly a very short time, through the development

of the great abundance of these natural resources, including the fisheries, will become the principal resources of the country.

Albania possesses a system of well-built roads, of air lines, a stable monetary system on the gold basis, schools with the highest requirements and system entirely under government control, well-organued law courts, and an exemplary police and gendarmerie, the latter under the able command of Major General Sir Jocelyn Percy.

#### POPULATION

Albania, according to the official census of May 15, 1930, has a population of 1,003,097, of whom 92% are of Albanian race, and the rest of 8% being Vlachs, Greeks, Yugoslavs, Bulgares, Gypsies, etc. About 1,250,000 Albanians are living in foreign countries, mostly in closed colonies of their own, principally in Greece, Italy, Roumania, Turkey, United States of America and in Yugoslavia.

Some 71% of the total population are Mohammedans; about 10%, chiefly in the North, are Roman Catholics; another 10%, particularly in the South, belong to the Albanian Orthodox Church.

Tirana, the capital, has 30,806 inhabitants, Durazzo (Durrës), the port of Albania, has 9,740, Elbasan 13,796, Scutari 29,209, Valona 9,110, Argyrocastro 10,840, Korcha (Korea) 22,790, and Berati has a population of 10,403.



## The Zogu Family

**B**URGAYETi, encircled by four towering mountains that form natural barriers commanding an unhindered view of the surrounding country, is a small village of about 150 dwellings in the Mati district. In the very heart of this picturesque little town rises a sheer, steep rock as if purposely so placed by nature as a watchful sentinel and guardian-angel of the vicinity. On the pinnacle of this mighty rock are the historic ruins of the grand old castle which was reduced to ashes in 1920 by the invading Serbs. As far as history can ascertain, this great, ancient piles dates from the 15th century, when legend narrates that Princess Mamica of Kruja, sister of the mighty warrior, Scanderbeg the Great, was given in solemn marriage to Zogu, Lord of Burgayeti Castle.

According to history, this ancient feudal Albanian family has its origin *in* the Northern provinces of Albania, and gradually moving southward, made permanent settlement in the 15th century in the district of Mati. Having firmly established themselves in this district, Zogu with a loyal following of his Mati people rose in revolt against Gazi Bey, then the Turkish Governor of this district, who lost his life in the ensuing battle, and Zogu seized the existing government, exchanged the Catholic faith for the more popular Islam religion, and was recognized by the Sultan as the hereditary ruler of Mati.

The next of this powerful, dominating family to enter the annals of history was Abdullah Bey, grandson of the victorious Zogu, who was killed in a valiant but fruitless battle for Albanian independence *in* 1621, according to the inscription on his tombstone. He was followed by his son, Ahmed Zogu, who gallantly defended his country against invading enemies. Mahmud Pascha Zogu, son of Ahmed, succeeded his father in ruling Mati to the best of his abilities. It fell to the lot of Djelal Pascha Zogu, son of Mahmud, to rekindle the ever-smouldering fires of rebellion against the foreign masters of Albania. And upon his return from Russia, wither he had been led by political plans, he immediately assumed command of a renewed effort to acquire Albanian independence. But Dame Fortune's dice were loaded against him and this attempt was doomed to failure. This courageous leader was seized by the Turks and sent into exile at Constantinople, and he was succeeded in command by his son, Xhemal Pascha Zogu. It was to this leader of Mati that a son was born on October 8, 1895—a son that was to prove a redeemer of the people for whom his ancestors had so bravely laid down their lives, and whose name is Ahmed Bey Zogu, the present King of the Albanians.

This powerful dynasty, uninterrupted through the generations, had continued as the hereditary princes of Mati, and under whose untiring vigilance the Turks were ever unable to set foot into this part of the country. A council of elders, presided over by the head of the house of Zogu, shaped the destinies of the warrior-natives according to the Kanun i Lek Dukagjinit, the old law of the Albanian mountaineers collaborated in the course of the centuries.

Ahmed Bey Zogu's father died in Ahmed's tenth year, during which time the youth had remained in his native mountains, learning the invaluable lessons of wisdom taught by Mother Earth. At the death of his father, Ahmed being too young to assume the guidance of his people, his Mother, Zahide, daughter of Emin Bey Toptani, a member of one of the leading families of Central Albania, took over the leadership of her adopted people of Mati. Displaying remarkable ability in statesmanship, this amazing woman, with her unflinching and keen judgment, with which her son is endowed, ably managed in keeping

her people independent and closely united while her young son was studying and developing his clear-sightedness and exceptional will-power, first as a scholar of the Lyceum and later at the Officer's Academy in Constantinople. Young Zogu remained there until rumours of the impending Balkan War caused him to return in haste to his native country. War clouds were indeed darkening the horizon, filling Albania with great anxiety as to her future. The blow fell in 1912, when war broke out.

Impelled by the fiery enthusiasm and optimism of his seventeen years, the young leader of Mati marshaled his people and rushed to Scutari which was besieged by the Serbs. It was only after losing 200 of his ablest men in the ensuing battles that Ahmed Bey Zogu was forced to return to Mati. At this time, a stirring call to all Albanian patriots was issued by Ismail Qemal Bey Vlora to convene at Valona, where on November 28, 1912, Albanian independence was declared. As voting delegate of Mati, Ahmed Bey Zogu went to Valona, but as soon as the Valona Congress was adjourned, he hastened back to his district to defend it against the menace of advancing Serbs. For fourteen, long, dreary months, Ahmed Bey Zogu, with a handful of men, fought the Serbs, and until their retreat, no Serbian soldier ever set foot on the soil of Mati.

The Great Powers began to realize, at the close of 1913, that an independent Albania was a political necessity if European peace was to be restored and maintained. So they offered the crown of Albania to Prince William of Wied, who, on March 7, 1914, arrived in Durazzo. Buffeted by every kind of political intrigue between the rivaling interests of the Great Powers, having no knowledge whatsoever of international conditions and antagonizing the local influences, the Prince of Wied could gain no foothold in the country. Thorough discontent and rising indignation was stirred up by ambitious politicians who were favored by the jealousies of the Great Powers. Essad Pascha Toptani, who first professed loyal devotion to the Prince of Wied only to conceal his own ambitious aims, was his most dangerous opponent, and who, under the pretext of friendship, undermined his position until revolution again broke out. During these turbulent times, Ahmed Bey Zogu was ever loyal to the Prince of Albania, looking upon his person as the embodiment of the State. However, recognizing the great danger the country was risking by these selfish rivalries, Ahmed Bey Zogu did everything in his power to aid Prince of Wied, but the intrigues proved too strong for him, and loathing to see the country writhing again in civil strife, he returned to his home at Mati. The regime of Prince of Wied was terminated by the outbreak of the World War, and upon his evacuation, the Serbs took possession of Albania.

Finally, in 1916, Ahmed Bey Zogu recognized his opportunity to help his country, and as the Serbs retreated before the victorious Austrians, he began negotiations with the victors, clearing the country of stragglers of the fleeing armies, he hoisted the Albanian flag on the Palace of Durazzo.

He agreed to cooperate with the Austrian armies, and commanded the Albanian forces cooperating with the Austro-Hungarian armies. He distinguished himself on the field of battle in a series of astonishing feats of daring. Once, single-handed, he captured a whole company of the enemy. But when Austria discovered that he had vague intentions to reestablish Albanian administrative independence, he was invited to Vienna for a council of war and then treacherously interned. With the conclusion of the Armistice he returned to Albania.

From this point onward the life of this daring young patriot is synonymous with the history of Albania. Suffice it to say that from 1918 his was the guiding and liberating spirit of Albania until he became, by unanimous acclamation of the Albanian people, on September 1, 1928, the King of the Albanians.

"Scanderbeg 11./' as His Majesty King Zog I is often called by his subjects, is a fitting title for this great man who has led his country and people through war and strife to ultimate peace, just as the famous old national hero did centuries ago.

#### AN AUDIENCE WITH THE KING-HERO

On the morning set for the writer's audience with His Majesty King Zog I., we drove from Tirana directly to the beach at Durazso, where the king was then occupying his summer "cottage." We stopped at the villa of the Aide-de-Camp to the king, who, with the Chief of Protocol received us, and, at the appointed time, accompanied us to the villa of the king which is situated directly on the sea.

In the large ante-chamber, we were met by another Aide-de-Camp who led us to the reception room of the king. Here, in a handsomely and most tastefully furnished room, we stood in the compelling presence of the man who holds the destiny of Albania in his capable hands.

After the formal bows of respect were made, shaking hands with the king, who, in his graciousness, seemed like an old friend, we were seated around a small table whereupon reposed several brands of cigarettes, and after we had each chosen a cigarette to our taste, the conversation, which was carried on in German, began to flow readily under the kindly suavity of the king.

We saw before us a tall, light-haired, well-built man, who just beginning the prime of his life, has hitherto led a vigorous out-of-door existence, which is still evident in his erect, healthy and military bearing. Even the strenuous unceasing work for the betterment of his country has not succeeded in taking the elasticity from his carriage. The noble set of his head on his broad shoulders is proof against any weakness. The high and slightly broad forehead defies the clouds of anxiety to settle for long. But it is his eyes that draw and reveal the innate greatness of the man become ruler. They are clear, grey-blue, shining eyes of the Seer, who ever keeps his goal in sight and marches steadfastly onward. His sensitive and fastidious nature is portrayed by his long, aquiline nose, but his mouth, shaded by a small, light mustache, shows that his sensitiveness is under iron control. A strong, clean-shaped chin instantly gives the observer an unerring index to the man's character: courageous, determined, but well-tempered with reason, and is dominated over by a rigid will which brooks no sullenness nor pettiness in himself or in others. He possesses great political acumen, consistency and constancy.

He is at his desk from early morning until late in the night. He does his work with zest, urbanity and serenity.

There is no doubt that the king is the leader of his people; his word is law—a law which is necessary and always most beneficial for the welfare of the country and people. He is most gracious and friendly and has the knack of putting everyone at his ease immediately. His smile is slow but brilliant as if letting one in on a secret known only to himself.

It was with genuine regret that we took leave after a delightful ever-to-be-remembered seventy minutes with His Majesty, and we felt that we had truly been in the presence of a great and generous man and king who will unflinchingly lead his people to a certain prosperity and happiness.

#### THE KINGDOM OF ALBANIA

It is like stepping from one world into another to visit Albania. Its naturalness and quaintness, which goes hand-in-hand with the native customs and costumes are still retained. It is a country of wild, unconquered mountains which have infused their strength into the inhabitants and given justification to their

name: "The Eagle Men/\* These vast towering mountain ranges make up almost the whole of Albania, and have rendered invaluable natural assistance as barriers to attacking enemies. Their grandeur fills the human soul with awe before their solemnity. The picturesque towns, perched in the laps of these magnificent guardians, are studies for those interested in folklore. Situated as they are on tiny plateaus, with part of the towns straggling up the side of the mountains, and the narrow, little streets winding their way between high walls, they are invaded with an air of mystic knowledge that has been mellowed into them and is to be found in no other place in Europe.

These little hamlets are constant sources of surprise with their old traditions, native songs and legends. There is one little town in Southeastern Albania—Tepeleni—that has the legend that there may only be ninety-nine buildings in the village, and if one more is added, it will be swallowed in an earthquake. And so in all adherence to this native superstition, there are only ninety-nine buildings! In the more distant fastnesses of the mountains, the natives live in tribes as their ancestors did before them, generations ago, each tribe having distinctive ornaments for their customs. There are hundreds of small farms scattered throughout the mountains; some in the valleys, others clinging to the side of a mountain, and still others perched on the summit of the lower knolls. Their implements and methods are of the simplest variety. Irrigation is their chief way of watering their fields, for water is plentiful. This delicious, cold, spring water has many sources in the heart of the mountains and is inexhaustible. The natives dig small channels, and where necessary, they make troughs for the water and lead it in zig-zag fashion down the mountain-side to their farms. There is nothing more refreshing nor cooling than this icy-cold fountain that Mother Nature has given the Albanians.

Albania is also a seat of historic interest, having been the battle ground for many wars with the Turks and the Greeks. The favorite hero of Albania—Scanderbeg—lived in Kruja, where, as a silent testimonial to this great hero's strength, are the remains of the old fortress. It looms directly above the town on a cliff, and the old Tower and lower massive walls still stand. Throughout the country many strategic points are heavily fortified and many watch towers raise their white heads on mountain tops.

The Albanians are by far the most hospitable people in Southeastern Europe. Their doors are never closed and a friend cannot ask too much. They are charmingly naive in their manners and delightfully quaint in their customs. There is nothing of the hurried, hysterical existence in Albania; the natives are leisurely and get the full benefit out of their sunny, mellow days. The city man is aware of a pleasant surprise at the lack of the constant blare of the motor horn; the peaceful serenity of the golden days is only broken by the occasional honk of the droschka and the cries of the street vendors. The nights, even during the summer, are delightfully cool and enjoyable; sitting in one of the comfortable cafe gardens of Tirana with a cup of delicious Turkish coffee! The old saying of "being killed with kindness" is literally true in this unique kingdom.

Upon leaving Tirana, the capital of Albania, and journeying further into the heart of the country, one comes more in contact with the native aspect of this unique kingdom in all of its charm. The land, in the vicinity of Tirana, is smooth and devoted to wide, rich fields of wheat and corn. A few miles further on the landscape loses its cultivated appearance and the scenery becomes more wild and desolate, and at the same time extraordinarily beautiful. From plains the country rapidly rises into rolling hills and rugged mountains.

The first point of interest along this route are the ruins of the castle of Petrela, which dominated this district until the rise of Tirana about 1600. However,

fragments of tile proclaim the fact that it was built for fortifying purposes in ancient times, but the more evident pro-Turkish brick and stone mortar decisively date its construction in the early fifteenth century. Even today this point has not lost its strategic value. Directly beneath this magnificent old pile, a half-deserted village still holds its weekly bazaars—a strange contrast of the unceasing incongruity between the old and the new.

As the solidly built road twists and turns up the majestic sides of the pass of Kraba, magnificent gorges, which form the head of the valley and which were cut in the course of the ages by winter torrents, come into view. At the summit of this mighty pass, it is possible to gain a view equal to that obtainable at the summit of the Continental Divide in the Rocky Mountain Ranges in the United States, one looks down on range after range, and on a very clear day a glimpse of Durazzo and the Adriatic Sea may be obtained. After having reached the top, the road, a result of much blasting, travels along the ridge of the mountains for some distance. On one side the rocks rise sheer and uncovered and on the other a deep precipice drops directly downward for many hundreds of feet. Only here and there a few farms dot the landscape. The trees at this altitude are small oaks, with very grotesque appearances because of the absence of many branches, but this is explained by the fact that the poorer peasants cut them off and store them as winter fodder for their animals.

Gradually, glimpses can be caught of the immense fertile plain of Elbasan, with the River Shkumbini dividing it like a sharp, silver knife, and on one side of this a magnificent range of mountains, rich in the shades of green and brown, roll away to the west. In this mighty range are to be found the two highest peaks of Albania: Krrab and Tomori. Krrab is really the higher, but it is popular belief that "Father Tomer" is the more lofty. These twin peaks are only accessible about five months out of the year, being entirely inaccessible on account of snow during the winter months.

Much festivity pervades in this part of the country in the summer months, for tradition has it that on the summit of Tomori is the grave of Iman Abbas Ali to which many natives make pilgrimages every August. For this purpose, a monastery has been built 1900 feet below the summit by the Bektashi Dervishes, where the pilgrims and visitors may lodge in comfort before the strenuous climb to the topmost point; and it is another native belief that that top is the seat of the ancient sky-god, related to the Zeus of Dolona and Homer's Olympos, and only certain, privileged mortals may reach his abode, others being warned away by nose bleedings and sickness. Also, there is said to be an inaccessible tree bearing golden apples growing on the summit. The peasants often take oath by "Father Tomor," which mountain they regard with superstitious awe.

It is the district just to the east of this richly historical center that was in constant dispute years ago as to whether it was to be Christian or Mohammedan. Therefore, in silent compromise, the elder members of the tribes had two names: the Mohammedan one used for public purposes, and the Orthodox one used privately and for baptisms and marriages, for these ceremonies a priest was smuggled in and out of the neighborhood by night. It was only about thirty years ago that the Christians felt free to declare openly their faith; this was due greatly to the intervention of the Austrians and Russians.

Perhaps of greatest interest to one visiting this fascinating country for health purposes, will be the healing springs at Shpat, only a few readily negotiable miles from Elbasan. These most unusual springs are certain cures for various forms of rheumatism. The sulphuric waters are so healing that merely by the repeated emptying of cans of water over the body in the oriental fashion many cures have been effected. The ground around these springs is very warm, and

until forty years ago, before the useful invasion of the modern hotels and baths, the natives dug large holes near the springs of the desired temperature and saturated themselves therein until cured. The wierdest phenomina of nature *lies* in the fact that the temperature of the springs *is* extremely varied: there are the cool, almost cold, enjoyable springs and others that are of varying degrees of heat up to the boiling point. It has been ascertained, however that the mineral content of all the springs is the same. These famous sulphur baths have performed many seemingly miraculous cures, and are considered usurpers of Carlsbad; and what is more important, the price of living is unbelievably low. The price one pays a day in the average European capital would serve for three or four luxurious days in Albania. It is really amazing that the price of regained health should be so astonishingly moderate. The advent of comfortable and convenient European hotels has greatly increased the value of these health-restoring springs, and made them the most desirable of their kind in the world.

It is also to be noted, with interest to the amateur archeologist, that there have been many traces found in the neighborhood of ancient Roman baths, but the secret of their architecture has been lost.

Further into the north and central part of the country is to be found the old Monastery of St. John Vladimir, the most important Orthodox monastery in Albania. Here abounds the richest folklore and tradition of the natives of Central Albania. This saint is quite unknown to the rest of the Orthodox world, but great faith is placed in him by thousands of the people in that part of the country. History has it that John Vladimir was a Serbian prince, murdered in 1016 on the Island of Presba in Macedonia, by his brother-in-law, John Vladislav, the last of the mediaeval Bulgar Tsars of Orchida. His body, buried in the Church of Our Lady at his birthplace, soon became the object of a pious religious cult; and due to the gentleness of his personality, the horrible method of his death, and the strange lights said to be seen on his grave, the ignorant of his day proclaimed him a saint, and his last resting place became renowned for its miraculous powers. Fearing that the Serbs would steal the body and transfer it to Durazzo, the Greeks who occupied this section in 1215, exposed that town to so many attacks that this plan was soon abandoned, and *in* the next century this district fell into the hands of Karl Thopia of Kruja, a Catholic; but little distinction was made in the two branches of the religion at that time. It was the same valiant Thopia who removed the body of this saint to the monastery where it now lies. This church was rebuilt at the end of the 19th century, but as it became too small for its congregation, it was demolished and rebuilt in 1901.

This old monastery, built on mediaeval plans, stands in a shady olive grove, where the low, long line of monastic buildings with picturesque red-tiled roofs, arc surrounded by a moat and a bridge, giving suggestion of the drawbridge and the high, lofty walls of an ancient fortress. The interior is an irregular square courtyard with the cells of the monks lining each side, and shaded by old galleries, underneath which were the storerooms and stables. The wood of these picturesque galleries and the long proportions of the buildings, and the rich-hued tiles of the roof combined to make a unique harmony of colour design. However, these cells have been uninhabited for some time, as the Orthodox monks have almost died out in Albania, and the monastery is now under the jurisdiction of a priest; but in due respect to their former occupants the wives of the priests do not go beyond the threshold of this old monument sacred to the memory of the devout ones who dwelt therein. Today most of the cells are tenanted by the servants and aged dependent of the monastery, also, a modern comfortable guest-house is maintained for the use of visitors.

The remains of the saint are placed in the chapel, where the simple-hearted

peasants, on the days of pilgrimage and exposition in early September, make wild efforts to get close enough to place a handkerchief or scarf on the coffin and to preserve these in case of illness, at which time, if worn, are believed to possess healing powers, especially malaria and other fevers.

At Bradshesh, the peculiarity in the dwellings immediately enables one to make the distinction between the natives of this district. The comfortable handsome stone houses, with large galleries on the upper stories before the living rooms and the stables below, denote the typical Albanian peasant homes. And in the immediate vicinity, the small, miserable reed huts tenanted by the gypsies.

There are two kinds of gypsies in this interesting country: one is the same as the English variety, speaking the quaint old Romany, although knowing at the same time the language of the country. This branch of gypsies is the eternal wanderers, constantly moving from one district to another, pitching their temporary tents where-so-ever they will. Their keenest interest is in horses and they live by their tradings and quite often entirely by their wits. The other kind of gypsies is those, who, having forgotten almost all of their Romany, speak only Albanian, and a little Turkish where they are old enough to have experienced the Turkish occupation of Albania. Essentially lazy, these broken-up tribes live mostly in the towns, gaining their daily bread in the simplest and most convenient way possible for them: singing and dancing, accompanied by the women on tambourines and by the men on violins and cornets. Their dances are picturesque in their native costumes with their hair either flowing or bound up, according to the particular dance. For those who may interpret their dances, there is a rich abundance of narrative in store for the reader. The harmony of tambourine, violin and cornet is not at all unpleasant when played by skilled musicians. The singing, however, is not harmonized, the performers using only one voice. Regardless of where these gypsies may live they earn their living in the same way, and being too lazy to cultivate even a small truck-garden, they lead easy, happy-go-lucky existences, and they have their huts free of rent, provided they work a few days out of the year for their ground landlord. Strange as it may seem, these wandering, anchorless people are about the only local blacksmiths found in this country, for the Albanians proper have a curious aversion to this occupation.

After leaving this quaint little town of Bradshesh, and penetrating into the heart of Albania towards Elbasan, large, beautiful olive groves cover the surrounding hills turning them into lofty, dark mounds of rich olive-green. Amid all of this rolling naturalness of Mother Nature, the new factory for refining the local oil, built by a French-Albanian company, gives it a startling note of modernity. However, this factory has never really worked due to the unfortunate conditions which are unfavorable to the export of oil, but there is oil in plenty of these rich regions.

Rounding the corner of a hill, a sheer wall rises in the near vicinity, with a few, ancient spires soaring about it. Upon approaching the wall, its height becomes more apparent and which proves to be the historic old town of Elbasan. This high wall gives the little city a most oriental appearance which is in truth, a reality, for Elbasan was founded by Mohammed II. for the purpose of suppressing the natives of this district, because in 1566, at the time of his conquest, there were few settlements in this region. The Sultan therefore built the town which is now known and called Elbasan, a word of uncertain derivation, but most probably being the Turkish *el basan*, meaning "*land-subduing*," and which, in all likelihood, was a copy of Alexander the Great's foundation of Smyrna. Here also Mohammed II. left several pure-blooded Turks, a plantation which does not seem to have occurred in any other place, for a great majority of the

10,000 natives in this town today are of the Mohammedan faith, and strongly resemble the dark and powerful physiques of the Turks. The Christian inhabitants of Elbasan are all Orthodox. The older Albanian colony has almost confined itself to the castle area, whereas the Vlachs, first cousins to the Romanians, more recent inhabitants, have satisfied themselves with the southern area of the town.

The great, impressive old castle built by Mohammed II. is still in a fair state of preservation on two of its rectangular sides. The main part of the havoc that has been wrought upon this magnificent old pile was due to Reshid Mehmed Pasha in 1832, when he quelled an insurrection in this area. The other part of the damage is due to the natural ravages of time and the elements. The castle proper is 994 feet by 916 feet and its massive old walls are seven feet thick. A small, daintily-designed mosque stood over the South Gate until 1920, when it was destroyed. There is no material evidence to the tradition that there was once a Jewish colony in Elbasan.

The picturesque, brown bazaar is held once a week just outside the south wall, and nowhere in all Albania is there to be found such a grand confusion of color as among the native costumes on market-day, which is generally Saturday.

There are several fine old mosques which are gems of Turkish architecture, especially that of Nazireshe located near the Vlach quarter, and is one of the oldest and most beautiful in the country.

Among the newer buildings are the Normal School, being erected at the foot of the dense olive groves just north of the town, and the new Alcohol factory a very few miles along the road leading to Korcha. The Grand Hotel with an excellent European and native cuisine adds much to the desirability of visiting this Albanian center.

A strange, wierd beauty is found among the olive groves at Elbasan, and the many walks through these young forests are indeed delightful. They add a strong note of contrast, with their dusky green leaves and snarled old roots and trunks, to the grey, white and sun-baked shades of the dreamy little town, and all this set like a tiny drop on the vast, fertile plain.

Elbasan is well-known for its great variety of products, made possible by the rich soil of the plain. The town, sheltered by the immense old wall, enjoys a somewhat hot house atmosphere, for which it should indeed be grateful, for it becomes terrifically cold during the winter months when the east winds sweep over it from the mountains of Librafchd. These great monarchs, snow-crowned ten months of the year, which surround the plain are very cool even in August, making them delightful resorts from the heat of the plain.

This district is versatile in that it can produce, in this dual atmosphere, both the products of the North and the South. There is an abundance of cotton, rice and tobacco, as well as corn, wheat and barley. And unlike many of its European neighbors, it has its own figs, melons, grapes, oranges, olives and lemons growing on the plain, and apples, pears, raspberries and various other northern fruits mellowing into ripeness on the mountains surrounding Elbasan. These same mountains are well-timbered, giving rich promise of future wealth. However, these mountainous forests are so dense and wild that they are veritably dense with bears, wild boars and wolves, an excellent but dangerous opportunity for the game-hunter. Curious as it may seem, there are remarkable few fish to be found in the nearby river.

Being the center from which all the roads radiate; to Korcha and Dibra in one direction, and to Berat and Durazzo in the other, Elbasan may be rightly called the naval of Albania. This old center of Turkish strife is also the natural boundary between the Tosks and the GEGS: Southern and Northern Albanians. It also marks the difference in the pronunciation of the native dialects. North

of the River Shkumbini (Zaranika) many words have an "n" where on the Southern side these same words have an "r." The dialect spoken by the inhabitants of Elbasan is intelligible to the natives in either of the extremes of the country, being proverbially as beautiful as the Greek of Yannina and the Turkish of Constantinople. For this reason the native tongue, as spoken by an Albanian, has been adopted as the basis of the language of the whole country. Until a generation ago, the Albanian language had never been written. For writing purposes, Greek, Latin, Servian or Italian was used, according to the scholastic pursuits of the writer.

The majority of the villages between Tirana and Elbasan are Mohammedan, due to the invasion of the Turks. Many of these little hamlets have preserved the tradition of having received visits from the mighty Scanderbeg, the national hero, who blessed or cursed the towns, according to the reception they gave him.

In direct contrast to many European countries, a small minority of the women of Albania are still secluded from social life. A native woman, especially of the Mohammedan faith, is rarely seen on the streets of the towns unless bent upon some specific errand. Almost all of these women in the larger towns are well-educated and speak many languages fluently. But having generally received their education in Constantinople and other nearby capitals, they still cling to the traditions for women established under the Turkish and Greek dominations of the country. Of course the Christian women are more inclined to play a part in the gay social life of Tirana.

Further into the interior of the country, the peasant women recede into the places made for them by tribal tradition. It is not an unusual sight to see them trudging along the sides of the roads carrying great bundles of sticks to their huts, digging the channels for the irrigation water for their farms, or wearily guarding their flocks on the mountain-side. Their existence does not seem unfair to them, they were born into their present status and to place them otherwise would be an unkindness, for they are happier than most of our so-called civilized and super-modern women. It is their duty to take care of the homes and to help in all forms of manual labor, and they do it without a single murmur against the fates that so placed them and which existence to the women of the world styled "more progressive," would be an unbearable hardship and not to be faced.

A view of Albania from an aeroplane, is like looking down upon a checker-board of bright colors. On one side, the home-made brick huts of the peasants situated on the pebbled-banks of the river amid waving green fields of corn, and on the other, the sun-burnt stucco of the new buildings, surrounded by lovely old-fashioned gardens, with the bright mosaics of the mosques with their golden spires lending rich hues to the already bewildering mass of color, a subject fit for an artist's brush. This thriving country, seen from the air, seems to glitter and shimmer under a bright sun amid the encircling majestic heights of the mountains, leaving the observer a well-stored memory of the ageless mystery of the country, the charming graciousness of the people and scenery never to be forgotten.

If one were to set before himself the map of Europe and tried to find the one country in Europe that has been the seat of greatest controversies, the land of the most invasions and exploitations, the most disputed territory of all

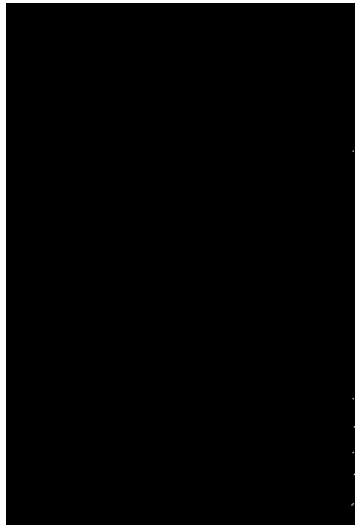
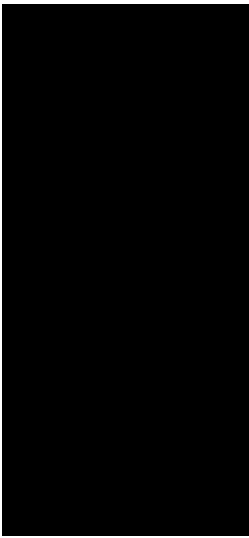
Europe for many hundreds of years before Christ up to the twentieth century, that country would, in truth, be Albania. For these reasons, the Museums of Tirana, Valona and Fieri are treasure houses for those interested in archeology and history, for there are to be found many relics of these influences. There are priceless and interesting excavations of prehistoric Albania as well as many valuable pieces from the Greco-Roman period. It is also necessary to mention here the marvelous Acropolis of Feniki, the porticus and the various statues and busts from Pojani. There are hundreds of other pieces of historic value that are worthy of notation here, but space forbids this long list; suffice it to mention as a last source of interest, Butrinto (ancient Buthrotum) with treasures beyond price of antique art and architecture which will captivate the admiration of all who appreciate classical beauty in its purest expression: The Greek porticus and the temple of Asklepios, the Roman theatre of the third century B. C, the statues, the intricacies of the many-colored mosaic works, the magnificent workmanship on the baptisterium of the Byzantine era, and so forth.

#### DURAZZO

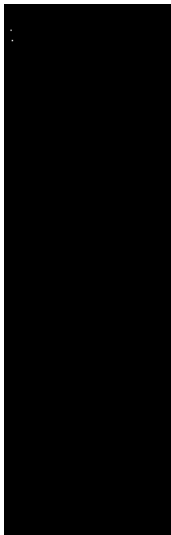
In a setting that has no rival in Europe, is the small town of Durazzo, the summer residence of the King. Situated at one end of a natural bay, with stately mountains forming the immediate background, this unique little city has advantages that are the desire of every vacation seeker. The neat white stucco houses with dim, cool interiors, and on the outskirts of the town, a few small red, mud-brick native cottages, form a vivid contrast to the sapphire blueness of the Adriatic Sea and the dark, olive-green grandeur of the mountains upon which half of the town is built. All along the sandy-white beach, to the opposite end of the bay, are comfortable villas not more than fifty yards from the water. The last villa in this scattered row belongs to His Majesty.

Looking from the far end of the beach towards Durazzo, one is faced with a view that contains more color than the entrance of the Bay at Naples. There is the same rich blue of the water and its reflection in the vast, blue vault of the heavens, the various startlingly vivid colors of the town with two or three slender, graceful spires rearing their gold-tipped heads upward and here the resemblance ends; Naples has no more; but Durazzo is nestled into the olive-green and brownness of the surrounding mountains—like a rare and priceless opal placed on a piece of half-blue and tawny velvet.

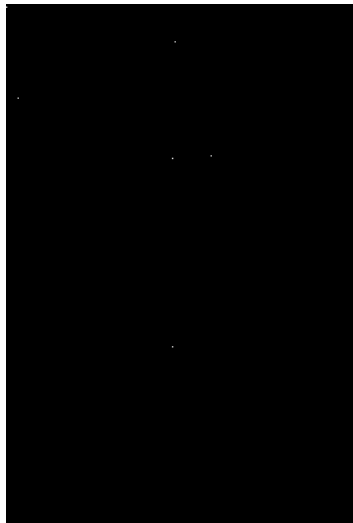
The villas are built comfortably of stucco and native stone and are very light and airy. It will completely astonish some to learn that these five and six room villas can be built for, including the price of the land, from \$800.00 to \$1,500.00 and live as comfortably as in a city with much more offered them; and strange as it may seem, there are only about a dozen villas, most of them belonging to government officials, along this ideal beach, with its white, clean sand and the cool waters of the Adriatic. Nothing is more enviable than to see these people on a hot morning taking a cool, refreshing "dip" before breakfast and to walk back—fifty yards—to their front porches for a delicious meal—taking life easily and leisurely and enjoying it to the fullest. For those who work all winter in a close office, the warm, healing air of the Adriatic is as a rebirth. And for those who are more inclined to mountain-climbing, they have only to walk about a half mile and begin the long, steady climb up to the summits of the Albanian mountains and they shall be rewarded with views that are indescribable. These great hills are covered with rich olive and fig trees and in the spring are complete blankets of irises. These dainty little flowers the natives bring down and plant before their villas, or in boxes for ornamentation. For



Dinner at Home



v



A Bazaar in Mats



the artist, Albania is as a paradise the year around; a rich riot of color and landscape is his reward in whatever direction he may turn; and as character subjects, the Albanian people lend themselves as unique studies.

In no other country would it be possible to have the great advantages of the sea at your front door and the mountains for your backyard, which abound in promise of adventure and discovery. Life in the summer is lazy and informal. The vacationer lives as only he has dreamed it possible, and enjoys a thorough relaxation in healing air, with wonderful swimming and mountain climbing.

Durazzo, the principal port of Albania, is one of the richest in historic traditions in the world. For Durazzo is the old Dyrrachium, where Caesar and Pompeius fought the greatest battle of that ancient civilization for the supremacy of the world; it is the so-called Porta Romana, and was the gateway for the Roman Imperial legions into their more easterly possessions. Remnants of the Roman-built city walls, with the gate of the old Roman fortress, are still standing, relics of the mighty civilization that existed many centuries before Christ. Later, in the middle ages, Durazzo was under the Doges of Venice, and this influence also had left its mark on the town. However, during the four hundred years of Turkish domination, most of the Byzantine and Venetian architecture was altered or destroyed by the invaders. Today, picturesque Durazzo lies peacefully on the Adriatic converted into a thriving little modern city, amid all of its interesting ruins, with an ideal port.

#### SCUTARI

This ancient city in Northern Albania, the scene of countless controversies since before the time of Roman supremacy, situated on the shores of the lake of the same name and surrounded by the ruins of the powerful citadel Rosephat, still retains the old bazaar established years ago. This little city is a haven for scientists, as well as for the artist and the simple admirer of the vast charms and beauties of the surrounding country. Encircled by high mountains, and just at the conflux of the bojana with the Drini and the Kiri rivers, there can scarcely be found any city in Europe more rich in natural charm, or the more proud possessor of ancient habits and customs. This city is also the source of much of the folklore and tradition of the Northern districts of Albania.

#### ALESSIO AND KRUIJA

Other cities wealthy with memories of the past are Alessio, the ancient Lissos, situated southward from Scutari on the left bank of the Drini river, and Kruija still more to the South. The former city still lives in the shadows of its ancient glory; the great ruins of her strong old fortress surround the remnants of what was a beautiful old mosque, built on the foundations of an old church, where Scanderbeg the Great, the national hero, has been laid to rest. At Kruija is another monument to the valor of the heroic past of Albania, Scanderbeg's mammoth stronghold, of which the tower and lower battlements still remain, and which was a silent witness to Scanderbeg's daring and successful wars against the invading Turks.

#### TIRANA

Tirana, the capital of Albania, has grown, in the last few years, from a small village of no great importance to a very modern city with flowered squares and gardens surrounding many of her cafe houses and has also well-lighted streets, where an occidental crowd mixes with the permanent residents. The city is located in one of the fertile plains of Central Albania, surrounded by a chain of pleasant hills rapidly rising to more lofty heights, and dominated over by the Daiti mountain which rears its majestic head 5000 feet above the city.

This city also has one of the most modern boulevards, recently laid, equalling the cement boulevards of any cosmopolitan city.

In the center of the city in a vast square are to be found a group of new and well-equipped office buildings, wherein the various departments of the government—the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of War, the Ministry of Education and Public Instructions, the Prime Ministers' office and others—are housed.

Also in the center of Tirana is located the beautiful palace of the king, lying in the midst of an immense, well-cared-for garden.

#### BERATI

By far one of the most attractive cities, of Albania is Berati, about fifty-five miles from Durazzo. Those who have seen this charming city have been justly profuse in praising it. With its stately old cathedral and many interesting and unique churches, and above all its splendid castle, a gem of architecture, it is worthy of international reputation and the admiration of all peoples. The town itself lies on an unsurpassingly picturesque defile of the Osuni river, and resembles the exquisite pictures by the old masters of quaint cathedral cities.

#### POGRADEC

Through many narrow, shady and cool dales and over steep, majestic slopes, first along the Shkumini river and then, after much winding and twisting, along the river Langajaka, we reach the town of Pogradec on the emerald shores of the charming Ochride lake, one of the prettiest in this more Southernly district. Pogradec is much visited by all who know of its fresh and invigorating climate in the summer; the Albanians themselves consider it one of the best and most healthy of summer resorts. It is a small, clean, prosperous town encircled by some of the most beautiful mountainous scenery in Albania. The town is also noted for its friendly and hospitable appearance which adds much to the natural charms of its surroundings.

#### KORCHA (Korea)

Korcha, properly called Korea, twenty-five miles from Pogradec, is the central terminus for Albania. It also lies in one of the most fertile plains of Central Albania which is under intense cultivation. Several of the principal roads connecting Albania with Yugoslavia on the North and with Greece on the South and East meet here. To this valued and fortunate location Korea owes her importance and her development into an exceedingly up-to-date center for trade and traffic which enables her to transport materials of all kinds to and from all parts of the country.

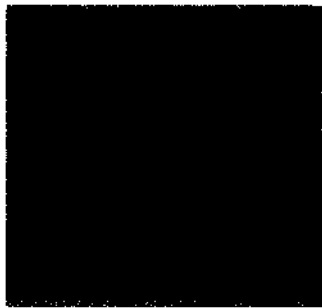
#### TOURISTIC

What other country in the world, besides Albania, can offer to the pleasure-seeker a combination of the warm waters of the Adriatic lazily lapping away the hours on dazzling white sand, and the tall, majestic and cooling mountains, an extremity of the Alps, just in the background? But of more interest to the traveller are the natural and picturesque little towns, now perched loftily on a mountain shoulder, now snuggled dreamily in a cozy green valley, all abounding in a wealth of native folklore and tradition that is as original and unique as the little towns themselves.

In Northern Albania, a range of the Alps raise their proud heads 6000 feet to the sun, towering over their surroundings like veritable monarchs of the earth, which would easily lead one to imagine that the natives of these lofty regions are either sun-worshippers or imitators of that lonely bird which frequents their heights—the Eagle; and the latter guess would be the true index to the character of the\* inhabitants—courageous, strong and enduring. These mountains, covered with stately pinewoods and beautiful forests of beches and olives many hundreds of years old, are often cut into deep, mysterious



An Official Occasion at the Palace



Mosque in Tirana



Government Buildings in Tirana



Remains of the Byzantine Baptistery in Pojani



gorges and lovely green valleys which lend their soft, rich and dark colors to make a picture worthy of the talents of a master.

The natural geography of Central Albania is that of littoral plains, imperceptibly changing into smooth hills with dense oakwoods, which encircle and hold as precious secrets many wide and fertile basins. These rolling hills, further to the south, heighten into mountains of unusual grandeur, intersected with wooded ravines and sheer precipices. For those who are irresistibly attracted by the invading charms of the solitary plains, the typical character of the Karst of these higher regions holds a peculiar fascination; also the lonely splendor of the bare, rocky limestone cliffs and summits, haunted by the mountain eagle.

The most well-known of Swiss and Tyrolian landscapes are in no way superior to the picturesque mountain lakes of Ochrida and Presba in Eastern Albania; their clear and limpid waters reflect the varied shades and colors of their rich surroundings and the magnificence of the Balkan sky in an unbelievable harmony of hues.

However, as stated above, the more lasting charm of Albania lies in the varied little villages and the unusual originality of the people expressed by their colorful and characteristic costumes, rather than in the exceptional beauty of the entire country.

#### HOTELS AND RESTAURANTS

There are innumerable small but most comfortable hotels throughout Albania, especially in Tirana.

While one must not expect to find in Albania the same kind of large modern hotels as in Chicago, London, New York, Paris, Vienna or Washington, but the traveler will find small and clean hotels, with running hot and cold water in some, like the Hotel Continental and the Hotel Internationale in Tirana, but, of course, there are several other hotels.

There are countless large and small restaurants throughout the country—spotlessly clean—serving the most delicious tasty food—European, American or Oriental.

#### AERIAL SERVICE

Today, with man in the air as often as the bird, there is no inconvenience caused by the more southeastern location of Albania, it has access by sea, rail, road and air. There are flights to Albania running on regular schedule and are very comfortable and efficient, none lasting more than a few short hours. The Adria-Aero-Lloyd has control of the Albanian air lines which affords regular passenger and mail service between Tirana, Korea, Scutari and Valona in a very short while, thus affording a bird's eye view of this picturesque country of beauty and tradition. The connections abroad are through Bari, Italy, on the west and Salonica on the east. The schedule between Tirana and Bari runs every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday and lasts only two hours. The time seems as naught, for the beautiful mountainous landscape below and the shimmering Adriatic will fascinate the most sophisticated eye. The schedule between Salonica and Athens runs also three times a week; i. e. Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and allows one an elevated glimpse of the seat of Greek culture and learning. There are also convenient connections between Austria (Vienna) and Albania, and a direct connection between Tirana and Rome.

It is worthy of most honorable mention that since these communications were introduced in Albania in 1925, there has not been one single accident; which is a record to boast of for ten years; for there are very few countries, if any, that has an achievement such as this of which to be consciously proud.

#### ROADS

In few other countries has there been such giant steps taken in furthering

the development and welfare of a nation as has been taken in Albania since the inauguration of the present regime. No field has been overlooked: Agriculture, Banking, Education, Industry, Trade and all other forms of internal services including roads. It is of vital importance to the wealth of any country to have adequate means of transportation, and since 1925, the king and government has given much careful consideration to the development and improvement of roads and construction of bridges. In the northern part of the country, a very important road from Scutari, through Puka-Ura and Vezirit to the Yugoslavian border has been commenced. This road is seventy-five miles in length and unites the main sections of the Scutari and Kossova districts. Another route of great national benefit is the so-called Dibra-Road, which has its beginning at the new great Zogu Bridge, near Miloti, and makes its way to the Yugoslavian frontier, which is a distance of over eighty miles, connecting some of the most fertile regions of the interior with the port of Durazzo and Tirana. Thus making an outlet for the tremendous agricultural sections and forming new markets for commerce and trade.

Amongst some of the more well-constructed roads in Albania which lend much to the enjoyment of the country and enhances its commercial value are those from Kruja to Mati, a distance of thirty-three miles, from Peshkopija sixty miles to Librahd, which road connects with that running between Elbasan and Tirana, a distance of six hundred thirty-four miles. Another of these roads is from Lushnja leading to Fieri twenty miles away, where a spur runs on to Valona.

Many roads throughout the country are rapidly nearing completion, and once finished will prove a decided advantage for further developments in every field of industry; the agricultural districts will be brought nearer their natural marketing centers, and will facilitate the traffic between individual markets. The total mileage of all the routes in Albania both completed and under construction, on March 31, 1933, was approximately two thousand one hundred miles.

Due to the unusual and difficult formations of the country, especially in the mountainous regions where the flow of water is constant and therefore presents the necessity of numerous large and small bridges, a complication is arrived at which no other country has to cope with. In spite of the colossal interference however, the number of permanent bridges has increased from three hundred sixty in 1921 to eight hundred in 1928. But the last five years have seen even greater strides and on March 31, 1933, found Albania with two thousand six hundred seventy-four permanently constructed bridges, and still work continues!

Albania has many roads leading to her neighbors on the three points of the compass, the following of which are the principal ones:

I. In a northeasternly direction from Scutari to the Albanian border near Hani-i-Hotit, and afterwards to Yugoslavia through to Podgoritza, a distance of twenty-one miles.

II. Another eastern route having its source at Scutari leads from Cattaro (Yugoslavia) via Antivari and Dulcigno or by Cettinje, Ritjeka, Virbazar and then Antivari and Dulcigno to the Albanian-Yugoslavian frontier near Goritze, and afterwards via Obliki to Scutari, which is eight miles on Albanian territory.

III. Twelve miles southeast from Peshkopija, the road winds its way from Dibra, Yugoslavia, to the Albanian-Yugoslavian border near Bilata, and continues southwards from Bilata to Librazhd, a distance of sixty miles. At Librazhd, the road branches to the west towards Durazzo via Elbasan

(Elbasan being fifteen miles from Librazhd); and the southern fork leads to Pogradec and Korca, the former city being thirtyseven miles from Librazhd.

IV. Kiafa-e-Thanes *is* a border line town between Albania and Yugoslavia and *is* used in the east of Albania for the road coming from Strouga, Yugoslavia, which forks, going northwards to Librazhd, and southwards to Pogradec and Korga. The distance from Kiafa'e-Thanes to Pogradec *is* sixteen miles, and from Pogradec to Korca, twentyfive miles.

V. From Korga a road extends southeast along the Albanian-Greek frontier. Along this road the traveler finds himself in three countries in a radius of little more than fifty miles, for this road begins at Monastir (Yugoslavia) and continues, via Fiorina (Greece), to Bilishti (Albania).

VI. The road from Yanina ( Greece) leads, via Erseka-Leskoviku (Kolonja) in a northeastern direction to Korea, and it also leads to Perati. The distance between these cities being: Perati to Leskoviku eighteen miles; Leskoviku to Erseka twenty-eight miles, and from Erseka to Korea twenty-eight miles.

VII. The road, coming northeastward to Argirocastro, from Yanina, Greece, to the Albanian frontier at Kakavia; about five and a half miles to the rear of Kakavia, at Yorgusati, the road branches: One fork continues to Delvina-Santi Quaranta, which is fifteen miles from Yorgusati; and the other on to Argirocastro, a distance of fourteen miles from Yorgusati.

For those travelers desirous of visiting Albania by car, it will be found to be more advantageous to use the Goritze road in the northern part of the country and, entering from the east, the route northwards from Pogradec via Kiafa-e-Thanes. In the south, the more desirable road is by way of Bilishti, also the roads from Perati to Korca and from Kavaja to Santi Quaranta and Argirocastro; the road from Dibra to Librazhd having too many slopes.

By far one of the most beautiful and most interesting of roads in Albania is the one opened July 2, 1933, between Tirana and Elbasan, and is almost thirty miles in length. Since it is only an hour and fifteen minute journey it should be of great assistance in opening the central part of the country. Before this road was constructed\* the traveler had to go by Durazzo and spend some four hours on the journey. And only ten years ago, it was necessary to go on horseback over the difficult pass of Kraba and spend a minimum of eleven hours on the trip. Thus the progress of Albania!

Taking this motor-route from Tirana, one first follows the interesting old caravan path that was made through the years. But soon the main road veers off because the path took the steeper climb upward.

This road has to cross many new bridges which are very compactly built and substantial, one of these being the long bridge over the Erzen into Petrela.

Upon leaving Petrela, one begins the long, steady pull upward to the summit of the pass of Kraba, which is two thousand six hundred twentyfive feet above sea level. However, the gradients are never very steep, but there are many long ascents. This mountain pass is really an achievement in road-making: The road twists and turns ever upward with strong embankments above and below. In the more dangerous parts of the road, powerful balustrades have been erected to insure the riders' safe passage. The firm and solid foundation is very good, being metalled with the famous local stone which is said to have durability enough to serve as grindstones for flour mills.

At the summit of the pass, very heavy blasting was necessary and many thousands of dollars were spent for sufficient dynamite. The road runs along the spine of the ridge for some distance, affording some beautiful scenery. Upon

leaving the summit, the road begins to unwind itself slowly down to the great plain of Elbasan, and the traveller feels he has had a magnificent view of a picturesque and romantic country in complete safety.

Nothing could be of more pleasure and interest than travelling in Albania today with its well-constructed and durable roads which cross at all parts of the country, with no place untouched. For those who have not the leisure to travel slowly in their own automobiles or one of those which may be hired with careful and skilled chauffeurs, and yet who wish to travel independent of the time-tables of the official service, there are motor-coaches available which make excellent connections with each other in any town. Albania may be reached by good roads from Greece and Yugoslavia; by sea on Italian, French, Greek or Yugoslavian lines and by air from any metropolis in a few short hours.

#### POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH SERVICE

If historical tradition *is* to be believed, then it can scarcely be said that any country has prospered under the temporary domination of a foreign power. Intentions may be for the benefit of the invaded country or of a more nefarious character, but seldom has such an occupation of a country ended with bettered conditions. Such was the result of the Turkish domination of Albania. This nation's postal and telegraphic service was left *in* such a miserable condition that it could not satisfy even the most primitive needs. The regular telephone system *did* not exist, and there was practically nothing that could be called a regular postal organization, for all that remained were ten poor post offices that were too disorganized to be of any assistance to the country.

Within the last decade the Albanian postal and telegraph system has been developed to a surprising efficiency. There are fifty-seven of such offices with one general post office in Tirana and nine district offices scattered throughout the country in the larger and more important cities.

The telegraph system is more highly developed than the telephone system. The former service has at its disposal a net of about two thousand miles of wire for the inland service—this is almost the same in proportion to its size as any other European country. This same organization also has three submarine cables for foreign service, namely: Durazzo-Brindisi, Valona-Otranto and Valona-Brindisi; and to Yugoslavia on the north are two more long-distance connections: One via Cetinje and one via Dilbra. The other country directly connected with Albania through this system is Greece which is reached by one line via Salonica and another via Yanina.

In further cooperation with the telegraph system is the three kilowatt wireless station of Tirana, which is in regular connection with Brindisi, Zagreb and Vienna.

The telephone service is rapidly being more fully developed. The local lines are in excellent condition in the larger cities and many of these are partially connected with each other. Much is being done to further the advancement of this necessity to the business man. The total length of the telephone net is about three hundred thirty miles.

Since her rapid strides in development have begun, Albania, since 1922, is a member of the Union Postal Universelle, of the Union Telegraphique Universelle, and later in 1925, has become a member of the Union Radiolegraphique Universelle.

#### AGRICULTURE

The fertile plains and hillsides of Albania are devoted solely to farming, **thus** making the country almost essentially agricultural. Since the land is the source of livelihood for the majority of the people, it is one of the chief aims of the royal government to care for the prosperity of the farmers. For this purpose

the government has undertaken a project of model farms to demonstrate methods which may be of assistance and instruction to the natives. The best example of this is maize. Almost three-fourths of the cultivated soil of Albania is devoted to raising maize of the white and yellow variety, very much similar to the German maize grown in the vicinity of Baden. As there are such large quantities of this food material, the model farms are doing their best to accustom the farmer to the use of maize as feed for cattle to supply it by grain for direct consumption. This is demonstrated by trial efforts to fatten different types of cattle and the experiment has met with success. The government is also conducting considerable propaganda work in various agricultural fields through these model farms.

The next in importance to maize is wheat, the growth of which is also being bettered under governmental direction. There is an annual crop with an average of about 1,325,000 pounds. The ministry of agriculture imports about 9,000 pounds of wheat of the Montana variety from Italy and distributes it to be used for sowing purposes; this has brought about excellent results. This importation has become necessary because it is desirable to improve the quality and the quantity of the domestic crop in order to export wheat into the eastern neighbor, Greece, where there is no wheat crop grown at all.

Besides maize and wheat, there are three other grainfruits grown in rather equal proportions. Rye is to be found in the mountainous regions of the east and northeast, where the annual average crop consists of about 80,000 pounds; oats and barley, with about average crops of 400,000 pounds and 220,000 pounds respectively, are grown in almost all sections of the country.

It is also to be noted with interest the rapid growth in the production of rice in Albania. This particular industry thrives in the districts of Elbasan and Berat. Here are many rice plantations and improvements in the irrigation system which has been rather antiquated to a certain extent, and since such a great supply of water is necessary, there have been great strides in bettering the method of agriculture which will, without doubt, greatly enhance the production of rice.

Following in importance to the stabilizing grainfruits, the growth of olives holds a position of note. Albania possesses about 1,500,000 trees which are scattered over an area of about 5,000 acres; to increase the supply, about 40,000 young olive trees have been planted in the last few years. However, the fruit alone was exported in former years and the fine oil had to be imported, but since 1930, two large oil refineries have been erected in Elbasan, and it is interesting to relate that, for the first time in 1931, about 110,000 pounds of refined oil could be exported.

Almost throughout the entire country, vast tobacco fields are to be found, which represent another great source of potential wealth for Albania. The more important fields are in the neighborhoods of Scutari, Elbasan and Tirana where an excellent tobacco is grown in great quantities. The tobacco crop of 1932 amounted to about 3,500,000 pounds. In order to draw every possible benefit for this branch of production, a far-reaching program has been started which will, in all probability, help not only to increase the production of tobacco, but also to improve the quality and preparation of the leaf, so that it will find a better and more ready market the world over. This program has already been set in motion and it is believed that it will be of considerable importance toward increasing national wealth.

In the fertile orchards and gardens of Albania there is hardly any kind of fruit missing; the cultivation of these is carried on on a vast scale, and offers a more prosperous future. There are figs, lemons, oranges, cherries, apples, pears,

pomgranates, apricots, peaches, melons, tomatoes, almonds and nuts. Within the last two years, the ministry of agriculture has distributed about 200,000 fruit trees, gratis, to the fruit growers. The Citrus fruit is preeminently Albanian and more than 300,000 pieces are exported annually.

Surprising as it may seem, the cultivation of vegetables has been neglected, but in recent years great care has been taken to spread the growth of these necessities. The most favored districts for the growth of vegetables are around Scutar, Korea and Elbasan. In the neighborhood of these cities the increase of vegetable cultivation is steadily progressing, and has become a rather important source of income for the suburban population.

One of the most completely absorbed domestic crops is that of cotton, and the home industry could easily absorb a far greater quantity. The growing of cotton was started during war time; most of its cultivation was centered first in the valley of the Vojusa River, and later spread into the districts of Tirana and Elbasan and in the vicinity of Shijak where it met with such success that it was later tried at Durazzo where it bore very good results. The government has zealously favored the cotton plantations and is hoping to reduce the importation of this material so that it will be beneficially felt in the balance of trade.

Potatoes have been introduced on a larger scale of late, but the growth of these have not met with much popularity among the natives, and even today the crop is not as large as would be desired.

Among the almost embracing productions of Albania is to be added the grape. These vineyards are not as extensive as might be expected, but is quite sufficient for the needs of Albania and is a very good wine; therefore, it is not necessary for the importation of any foreign wines for the population. The best vineyards to be found are in the sections of Scutari, Berat, Korea and Valona.

#### FOREIGN TRADE

Due to the constant change of government that Albania was subject to prior to 1921, the country has been unable to develop its natural resources, so as a result it has had to depend mostly upon foreign trade.

In accordance to the figures of the official statistics for 1932, the total of Albanian imports amounted to 22,815,000 gold Francs and her total exports amounted to 4,500,000 gold Francs. The figures for 1933 are of necessity reduced because it is the regrettable consequence of the world economic crisis, which, naturally, has affected Albania as well as other countries of the world. These figures being: Imports 15,938,221 gold Francs and 5,746,476 gold Francs for exports.

Albania being an essentially agricultural country, has also suffered from the world disaster in this field, and the blow to her in this connection has been a severe one, since 4/5 of her exports consist in farming products of the agricultural industries, such as olive oil, cheese, eggs, wool, hides, etcetera.

One of the widest fields for imports at the present time in Albania. She has been unable to tap her own source of supply and is dependent to a great extent upon other countries. It is hoped that in the near future she will be enabled to develop her own great possibilities, but until now the most profiting country in her import trade is Italy with about 40%; then the United States of America and Yugoslavia following with approximately 10% each. The next two countries which have a share in her imports are Czechoslovakia and England with 7% each. The last sharers of any definite amount are Germany and Roumania with 5% each. The remainder is divided among the other countries, and here it is worthwhile to note that the number of nations with which Albania transacts business is constantly increasing. The principal imports of Albanian

bania are of a more constructive nature; some of which are technical and chemical products, textiles, constructing materials, machineries, etcetera. Up until this time it has also been necessary to import cereals for the years in which the crops have been unsuccessful, but in all probability these imports will be superfluous in the future since modernization of agricultural methods has recently caused greater strides towards progress.

The deficit in the balance of trade seems exceptionally heavy at first glance but it is naturally explained by the fact that most of the imported merchandise such as machinery, construction materials, etcetera, have been put to profit-bearing which are bound to increase, in due time, the productive possibilities of the country.

#### FOREIGN REPRESENTATION

The Kingdom of Albania has concluded treaties of amity, arbitration, commerce, extradition, navigation and consular conventions with practically all foreign countries.

Albania is a member of the League of Nations.

It is the earnest wish of King Zog I and the Albanian Government, according to a statement personally made to the author, to continue in amity and peace with all nations alike.

The Kingdom of Albania maintains diplomatic and consular relations with practically all foreign nations, having permanent legations with accredited Envoys Extraordinary and Ministers Plenipotentiary in Athens, Berlin, Constantinople, London, Paris, Rome, Washington, and other capitals, and consulates-general or consulates in various cities of Austria, Dominion of Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Roumania, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, United States of America, Yugoslavia, and so forth. Albania also has appointed permanent press representatives—Chiefs of Press Service of the Albanian Government and/or Press Attaches—in Austria, France, Great Britain and other countries.

Doctor Fuad Aslani, formerly attached to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, is the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of Albania in Great Britain. He also fills the important post of delegate to the League of Nations, being often sent by the Albanian Government to attend conferences in Geneva.

Faik Konitza, who has been mentioned in the section dealing with the *Vatra*, is the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the United States.

Czechoslovakia, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Italy, Roumania, Turkey, the United States of America, Yugoslavia, and other countries have legations in Albania, while numerous nations maintain consulates-general or consulates in Tirana and other cities.

#### MONETARY AND BANKING SYSTEM

The monetary unit of Albania is the Goldfranc at one hundred Qindtar since the law of July 12, 1925. The gold coin of twenty Goldfranc has a weight of 6.34161 grams with an allowance of 1.29%. The notes of the Albanian National Bank are for five, twenty and one hundred Goldfrancs, and the coins issued are for one, one-half and one-fourth Lek, one Lek being the equivalent of one-fifth of a Goldfranc—twenty Qindtar.

In 1925, the exclusive privilege of emitting notes was granted to the Albanian National Bank, which is a Limited Company, and which right is solely theirs for a duration of fifty years. The capital of the bank is 12,500,000 Goldfrancs of which three-tenths are actually paid in. The bylaws of the Bank demand that the notes have to be covered with thirty-three and one-third per cent; any decline of this percentage would have, eventually, to be circumvented by an increase of the rate of discount, which, at the present time is two and

one-half per cent. The cover must be made of actual gold or of sight-drafts payable in gold; but in any case, one-third of it must consist of actual gold, that is: one-ninth of the total amount of notes in circulation.

The notes in circulation were 13,294,840 Goldfrancs, according to the Bank's balance sheet of December 31, 1932; the liabilities of the National Bank, on the same record, which were payable on sight, amounted to 19,432,192 Goldfrancs. Both of these totals were balanced by 5,534,837 in gold, sight-drafts also payable in gold amounted to 26,365,270 Goldfrancs and by 8,041,902 of other stable values. The Albanian Franc, at the rate of exchange, has always been equal with the Swiss Franc.

It is rapidly becoming more desirable to establish new banks in Albania, for at present there is only the Albanian National Bank and a branch of a Yugoslavian bank, and with the increase of trade and general impetus to business, there are greater demands for other banking institutions which are rapidly becoming a necessity.

The national budget of Albania for the financial year of 1933-34 shows the following figures:

Income.....	24,527,000
Expense.....	27,527,000
Deficit.....	3,000,000

There is a special fund, furnished by a loan, which covers the deficit of three million francs. The tithe, a special form of taxation, is in the process of elimination. This will be abolished completely as soon as the necessary preparations are terminated, such as the survey of all the land and the public register which has hitherto been of prime importance, due to the method of control of the tithes. This kind of taxation, as is generally known, consists of taxing one-tenth of the gross revenue of all land given to farming. The proceeds of which are being allotted in public auction. Though few can escape being perfectly aware of its drawbacks and inconveniences which it automatically perpetrates and presents, as above mentioned, the people of Albania have become so accustomed to it through years of usage, that they have no objection to it, and as a matter of fact, do not resent it particularly.

The national budget of the financial year of 1934-35 shows the following statistics:

Income.....	18,506,500
Expense.....	18,888,192
Deficit.....	381,692.

#### PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

We often read in books appearing from the pen of persons who never have been in Albania nor taken the trouble to study the question, that the Albanians are illiterate and have no schools, but we can easily prove the exact opposite to be the truth.

Among Albanian statesmen, officials and individuals, we find graduates from the universities of Brown (Providence), Cambridge, Constantinople, Harvard, London, Oxford, Pans, Vienna and other celebrated centers of learning.

National law in Albania makes education compulsory, thereby putting knowledge within the reach of every inhabitant.

Education in Albania has been nationalized by law passed in Parliament and sanctioned by the King of the Albanians and all institutions of learning are placed under the control of the Minister of Public Instructions. By the same law all private school! have been abolished and were replaced by schools created by the government.

The years 1933 and 1934 proved to be years of great and beneficial recon-

struction of the education system *in* Albania on a permanent and broader basis.

There are numerous Kindergartens scattered throughout the entire country.

The Albanian Government maintains over five hundred primary schools.

The high school system is well-developed, there being two gymnasiums—high schools—one in Scutari and one in Tirana, the latter with a section for classics. There is a Lyceum in Korcha, of which the teachers are Albanian and French and their salaries paid by the Albanian Government, and an Albanian is the administrative director of this Lyceum. In Tirana is a high school for girls—the Lyceum Kyrias—which, under the new nationalization law became a part of the Gymnasium of Tirana.

A large educational institution for girls was established by the Albanian Government in Tirana—the Nana Mbretneshe—where the girls from the closed private schools have been collected. This is one of the best organized institutions of learning.

There are normal schools for girls in Korcha and in Scutari, the latter a part of the Gymnasium of Scutari.

Several Technical Schools exist in Albanian cities—Berati, Korcha and Durazzo.

New schools are opened and the educational system improved and furthered as the government budget and conditions permit.

There is naturally great need for more schools, especially colleges, and it is hoped that the great and numerous educational foundations and individual patrons of the United States, Great Britain and other nations will see fit to take advantage of the need and opportunity in Albania in furthering the educational work by helping in the founding of or the maintenance of old and new schools in this worthy country and thereby forever earning the gratitude of the Albanian people.

#### MINERALS AND MINING

Albania's soil is extremely rich in ore and valuable minerals, and very little is so far developed or in the process of exploitation.

The Romans were aware of the deposits of asphalt near Valona, but in mediæval times the continuous wars and later the Turkish domination did not favor the development of the mining industry.

Induced by the appalling scarcity of all raw materials during the World War and the numerous foreign occupations of Albania, a more intensive search for mineral products had been undertaken, and thus, the Italians found naphta near Valona, and lignite along the Vojusa river and in the vicinity of Tepelena. The Austrians discovered lignite near Tirana and along side the road to Elbasan and also an abundance of copper near Puka. The French unearthed lignite at Pogradec and copper in several places near Korcha.

The present Albanian Government has given greater and more systematic impulses to the mining industry and to the research and study of geological conditions and possibilities.

There were 18 mining concessions granted between the years 1922 and 1928 and 21 concessions given out in 1929, thus giving these industries a strong impetus.

There are numerous concessions for oil, copper, iron, asbestos, talcum, lead, plaster and marls of cement, lignite, asphalt, etc., still available to responsible companies and individuals, and in this connection the Albanian Government gives preference to American and British firms.

Some of the large international mining and naphta enterprises have begun a continually increasing activity in Albania—Anglo-Persian Oil Company, Stand-

ard Oil Company, the Franco-Albanian Syndicate, Azienda Italiana Petroli A I' bania, Societe Miniere di Selenica, and others. But only the first steps have been made in the exploitation of the natural wealth of mineral products in which the Albanian soil abounds.

Copper has been found near Puka, Rehova, Kamenica and Merdita; iron in the Drini Valley, near Kolonja and in the Graba Mountains; stratas of asbestos and talcum near Kruja, Dishnica and Voskopoja; chrome near Pogradec; lead in the North; arsenic near Komani; plaster and marls of cement appearing in large quantities near Valona, Alessio and many other places; Lignite in numerous parts of Albania, especially in the vicinity of Tirana, Nomaliaj, Korcha, etc.

A most profitable future is open to the many thermal and mineral springs, especially the hot sulphur springs near Elbasan—all with great diversified medical possibilities.

These thermal and mineral springs have been known to and used with great results by the neighboring population for many years for all ailments, and only *in* recent years has their fame spread and great numbers of visitors from abroad began to come and appreciate the salutary effects of these springs.

#### FISHERIES

The fishery industry in Albania has tremendous possibilities and is so far undeveloped. At the present time, canned fish is imported into Albania from foreign countries, which is without reason or necessity, for the whole of Albania's western boundary is the plentiful Adriatic Sea. If this tremendous, almost inexhaustible possibility were to be sounded, there would be found a resource more than sufficient to supply the whole of Europe. This great possibility for canneries is only one of the many for which the Adriatic Sea may be utilized.

#### INDUSTRY

Albania being so centrally located for the Balkan States and with their only outlet to the Adriatic Sea, is an ideal place for the establishment of factories, branch-factories and wholesale supply stocks covering all trades, from canneries to automobile manufactures to supply the needs for the Balkan States and other nearby countries, this being especially desirable and ideal when we consider the facts that ample labor is easily to be had and the wages are the lowest in Europe.

Land and building materials are extremely low in price, making it possible for the men of moderate means to live luxuriously.

Taxation on new properties does not exist. All new buildings being fully free of all taxation for a long number of years.

The Albanian Government *is* always ready to extend all facilities in its power to encourage foreign industries to establish business branches, factories and store houses for their products.

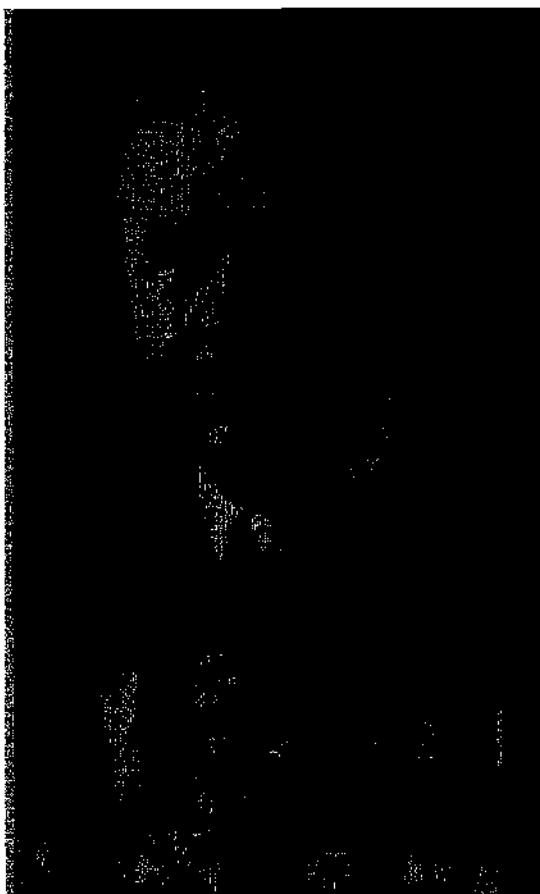
Customs duties are low, *in* some instances negligible or entirely eliminated.

When we consider the fact that a Ford automobile, costing in the United States about \$375.00, with the customs duties and taxes sells in France for about \$1,200.00, and that if this same automobile would be shipped directly to Albania, where the parts would be assimilated and sold from Albania, the automobile would be available to the European public for about \$500.00 to \$600.00, this clearly gives us a good example of low customs duties and taxation in Albania.

From Albania it is easily and most conveniently possible to supply the needs of Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Roumania, Yugoslavia, and other countries.

#### \* THE V A T R A

Since the beginning of this century thousands of Albanians have immigrated to the United States. To these immigrants much credit must be given for the



**BRIGADIER GENERAL WILLIAM E. HORTON, U. S. A. Retired**  
**President and Treasurer of the Society of American Friends of Albania**



promotion of their native country's independence. For these people formed a powerful organization in the United States known today as the "Vatra" (meaning "Hearth"). At first, numerous societies were formed, and between 1906 and 1918 fourteen newspapers were published in America, ten of which were in the Albanian tongue, and four in English and Albanian. Through the diligent work of Faik Konitza, the present Albanian Minister to the United States, and with the cooperation of the leaders of the Albanians in America, the *Albanian Federation "Vatra"* was formed in 1912. This great self-appointed task was accomplished by Faik Konitza and his associates by persuading the many local societies to combine into one powerful national association. Boston is the headquarters of the "Vatra."<sup>1</sup> The Association's first organ of expression became the *Dielli* (Sun), a newspaper established in 1909 and published in the Albanian language, being today under the able editorship of R. Xh. Ghurrazezi. The present president of the *Vatra* is Vasil J. Pani, a young and sincere Albanian patriot, who, although at that time only a boy, did some lighting as a volunteer in the 1913'14 struggles for the independence of Albania. The *Vatra* worked loyally for the Allied Cause during the World War and was enthusiastic over the late President Wilson's program of self-determination. The Albanians headed thirteen other races in their contribution to the Third Liberty Loan, which *in itself* is rather unusual when we consider that the members of the *Vatra* were mostly of the laboring classes. American experiences influenced and helped to define clearly the aims of the *Vatra* after the World War. This Association's first goal was for Albanian independence, secondary to this was the aim to redeem their native country from feudalistic and oriental conservative survivals. The Albanian delegation to the Peace Conference was granted financial aid by the *Vatra*, and this great national organization in numerous other ways greatly contributed towards Albania's independence.

Since the amalgamation of the local societies into one national organization—the *Vatra*—Faik Konitza has always been its outstanding leader.

Mr. Konitza came to the United States to lecture in 1908, and under his leadership the *Vatra* grew from some twenty associate member societies into a national Association consisting of about fifty societies. He returned to Europe in 1912 as an Albanian delegate to the London Conference. He was interned in Vienna with Ahmed Bey Zogu, now King Zog I., during the World War. Upon his release, after the signing of the Armistice, he resided in Italy as a semi-official delegate of his country. At the outset Konitza was inclined to support Noli, but the obvious sincerity of Ahmed Bey Zogu's patriotism caused him to become a firm adherent of King Zog I.

Fazli Frasherî was sent by the then President Zogu in 1925 to Boston for the purpose of conferring with Faik Konitza as the head of the *Vatra*. The following year saw Konitza appointed as the Albanian Minister to the United States, a position which he still occupies with much distinction. His unobtrusive but scholarly qualities have indeed furthered the high reputation and prestige of the Albanians in America.

## SOCIETY OF AMERICAN FRIENDS OF ALBANIA

The Society of American Friends of Albania was originally planned and organized by Brigadier-General William Edward Horton and Colonel Baron Marcellus D. A. R. von Redlich in 1932, and after successfully enlisting numerous prominent personalities, the Society was incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia in December, 1932.

The Society has as its object to bring into one group the American friends of the Kingdom of Albania, to encourage and further friendship and understanding between the peoples of the United States of America and the Kingdom of Albania, to further and promote educational work in Albania, to make Albania and the Albanians better known and understood among the people of the United States, to publish circulars, booklets and pamphlets about Albania and the Albanians for circulation in the United States, and for such other legal and proper purposes as the officers and members of the Society may from time to time decide upon.

The officers are composed of: Two Honorary Presidents, one a citizen of Albania and the other a citizen of the United States, namely, the Albanian Minister to the United States and the American Minister to Albania;

Two to four Honorary Vice-Presidents, who shall be citizens of Albania and/or the United States, which offices are now filled by Major John Vernou Bouvier, Jr., Mrs. John Allan Dougherty, and Mehmed Bey Konitza;

One President, which office is filled by Brigadier-General William Edward Horton, who is also Treasurer of the Society.

One Executive Vice-President, vacant, but the duties of this office are temporarily attended to by Baron Marcellus D. A. R. von Redlich, who also holds the office of Vice-Chairman of the Membership Committee.

Three Vice-Presidents—Brigadier-General Matthew A. De Laney, the former Governor of the State of Georgia, John M. Slayton, and Mrs. Ralph Worthington;

One Secretary General—Former Congressman S. Wallace Dempsey, who is also the General Counsel of the Society.

One Secretary—Rev. Dr. Joseph Christopher, Professor of the Catholic University of America.

The Membership Committee is headed by Colonel John Bion Richards as Chairman.

The headquarters of the Society is in Washington, D. C.









