

**E. F. KNIGHT**



**ALBANIA**

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# **Albania**

**Enriched edition. A Narrative of Recent Travel**

*Introduction, Studies and Commentaries by Clara Easton*

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# Introduction

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At once a journey across forbidding mountains and a negotiation with layered loyalties, E. F. Knight's *Albania* traces the friction between an inquisitive outsider's wish to observe and classify and a society whose codes, landscapes, and memories make belonging contingent, where empire's reach meets clan custom, where city squares echo with commerce while highland tracks preserve older reckonings of honor, and where the traveler's notebook—eager to pin names to passes, rivers, and peoples—must continually reckon with the living, shifting character of a country that resists easy synthesis yet invites attention with its vitality, resilience, and surprising intimacies.

*Albania* is a work of British travel writing by the journalist and adventurer E. F. Knight, set in Ottoman-era Albania and the wider Balkan borderlands in the late nineteenth century. Written in the idiom of reportage inflected with ethnographic curiosity, it belongs to a moment when European readers sought first-hand accounts of regions then little described in English. Without pretending to be a definitive history, Knight's book records a passage through towns, valleys, and highlands at a time when imperial administration, local authority, and trans-Balkan commerce overlapped. The result is both a narrative of movement and a compact portrait of place.

Knight's premise is disarmingly simple: to see Albania on the ground and report what he finds. The pages carry the

rhythms of an itinerary, moving from lowland settlements to mountain passes, from towns to remote plateaus, pausing for sketches of costume, street life, religious observance, and the give-and-take of hospitality. His voice is steady and empirical, punctuated by flashes of wry humor and moments of admiration for practical ingenuity in difficult terrain. The tone remains observational rather than polemical, inviting readers to weigh what they see with him without demanding conclusions about politics that extend beyond his remit.

Stylistically, Albania pairs crisp delineation of routes and vistas with close attention to manners, dwellings, and work. The author writes as a trained reporter who prefers concrete particulars—food set on a table, roughness of a road, cadence of a market—yet he also acknowledges the limits of an outsider’s comprehension, especially where language, custom, and local histories leave meanings layered. He situates anecdotes within their settings rather than extracting them as curiosities, and he resists melodrama. The prose is unhurried, lucid, and alert to contrast, sustaining a balance between scenic description and the small negotiations that make travel possible.

Themes emerge organically from the encounters: the elasticity of borders in a land where trade, kinship, and pasture traverse official lines; the interplay of honor and hospitality as practical ethics; the coexistence of communities identified by language and faith without reducing life to those identities; the reach and limits of imperial administration; and the traveler’s recurring discovery that names on maps conceal as much as they reveal. By holding observation and inference in suspension, Knight lets the reader register complexity without didactic scaffolding, suggesting that understanding a place involves

patience, reciprocity, and an acceptance of ambiguity as a working method.

For contemporary readers, this book matters as both document and mirror. As a document, it preserves a snapshot of Albania on the eve of dramatic twentieth-century transformations, offering context for debates about sovereignty, reform, and regional entanglements that still reverberate. As a mirror, it reveals the vantage point of a nineteenth-century British observer—curious, often sympathetic, yet shaped by his milieu—inviting critical reflection on how knowledge about others is produced. Reading *Albania* today encourages a double vision: attention to the textures of daily life that endure, and alertness to the narrative frames that travelers bring and that readers can interrogate.

Approached with that double vision, Knight's account remains rewarding. Its immediacy, sensory precision, and measured pace make space for landscapes and people to appear on their own terms, while its careful restraint avoids collapsing variety into a single thesis. The central tension—between the impulse to classify and the reality of a living borderland—still speaks to discussions about identity, mobility, and the ethics of representation in travel literature. To read *Albania* is to accompany a disciplined observer through a region in motion and to test, alongside him, how attention, respect, and descriptive patience can illuminate without claiming final authority.

# Synopsis

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Albania by E. F. Knight presents a measured travel narrative that introduces a varied land and its peoples to an English-speaking readership. Knight positions himself as an inquisitive observer, moving through coastal districts and interior highlands to assemble a composite portrait rather than a single itinerary. He sets out the book's purpose with clarity: to describe the terrain, society, and political conditions as encountered on the ground, avoiding stereotypes while acknowledging uncertainty where information is partial. The work balances first-hand episodes with contextual explanation, letting local voices, customs, and practical constraints guide the structure of his account.

Early chapters establish landscape as a governing force. Knight portrays the sharp transition from maritime towns to mountain passes, noting how distance is measured less by miles than by gradients, seasons, and the availability of paths. Travel itself becomes a form of inquiry, revealing the organization of settlements, patterns of hospitality, and the necessity of intermediaries who understand local boundaries. He underscores how weather, river crossings, and the scarcity of reliable roads shape time, risk, and exchange. Through this logistical lens, the reader meets Albania as a mosaic of adjacent worlds whose connections are hard-won and provisional.

From this physical frame, Knight turns to the social structures that sustain order. He describes kin groups and neighborhood alliances, the informal councils that arbitrate

disputes, and the role of honor codes that both restrain and inflame conflict. Rituals of welcome, obligations between guests and hosts, and practices designed to prevent bloodshed are set alongside the realities of feud and reprisal. Rather than exaggerate violence, Knight situates it within systems of mediation that privilege reputation, restitution, and face-saving compromise. The emphasis falls on procedural norms—who speaks, who guarantees terms, and how decisions bind those present and those absent.

Religious life appears as a textured field rather than a rigid map. Knight observes communities of different confessions living in close proximity, attending to local shrines, feasts, and observances that organize the year. He traces how beliefs intersect with kinship and neighborhood, noting the importance of clerical figures while stressing that daily cooperation often overrides doctrinal boundaries. Urban centers demonstrate a different rhythm, where trade and administration blur communal lines, yet the countryside maintains its own cadences. The narrative avoids simple causal claims, suggesting instead that practice, not abstract theology, most clearly explains cohesion and friction.

Knight next addresses governance and diplomacy, placing local realities within broader imperial and European contexts. He examines how authority is asserted by officials, negotiated by village leaders, and tested at frontiers. Taxation, conscription, and the circulation of permits and passes emerge as everyday instruments of power. The book also notes the strategic attention Albania attracts from neighboring states and great powers, stressing that external designs rarely map neatly onto mountain districts or port towns. By foregrounding administrative routines over grand proclamations, Knight reveals a politics conducted in petitions, escorts, postings, and temporary accommodations.

Economic chapters balance inventory with caution. Knight sketches pastoral cycles, smallholder agriculture, and coastal commerce, then considers resources that outsiders deem promising. He argues that fortunes depend less on hidden wealth than on the unglamorous work of roads, bridges, and predictable security. Markets open when travel times shrink; ventures fail when intermediaries or safe passage cannot be guaranteed. The narrative weighs opportunities against constraints—terrain costs, capital scarcity, and the need for local consent. Throughout, he resists quick cures, suggesting that durable change must align with existing practices rather than overwrite them.

In closing, Knight reflects on perception itself—how distance, rumor, and selective reporting have mischaracterized Albania. His chronicle proposes a corrective: attentive observation, a willingness to revisit assumptions, and respect for the institutions that make life possible in difficult country. Without forecasting outcomes, he links geography, custom, and politics to explain both resistance to intrusion and capacity for adaptation. The book endures as a careful snapshot of a society at a hinge moment, valuable to readers seeking context for later Balkan developments and to travelers who recognize that understanding begins with the routes one can actually walk.

# Historical Context

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Edward Frederick Knight's *Albania* (1880) is set in the immediate aftermath of the Eastern Crisis of 1875–78, when Ottoman rule in the Balkans was shaken by revolt and war. The Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78 ended with the Treaty of San Stefano and the Congress of Berlin (1878), which redrew frontiers and recognized new or enlarged Balkan states while leaving Albanian-inhabited lands within the Ottoman Empire. Knight traveled through northern and central districts as the empire reorganized its provinces and garrisons. His narrative engages the “Eastern Question,” observing how diplomacy in Berlin translated into contested borders, refugee movements, and tense local politics.

Administratively, the region Knight visited belonged to Ottoman vilayets such as Scutari (Shkodër), Kosovo, Monastir, and Janina, each divided into sanjaks governed by appointed officials under the Sublime Porte. Centralizing Tanzimat reforms had expanded taxation, conscription, and gendarmerie presence, yet highland communities retained significant autonomy. In northern Albania, Catholic and Muslim clans followed customary law known as the Kanun, regulating blood feuds, truce pledges (*bessa*), and collective security. Religious life was mixed—Sunni Muslim majorities, vibrant Franciscan missions, and Orthodox communities—often intersecting with local loyalties. After Sultan Abdülhamid II consolidated power in 1878, provincial officials balanced imperial directives with the realities of tribal negotiation.

The League of Prizren, founded in June 1878, forms essential background to Knight's journey. Convened by Albanian notables from all confessions, the League sought to defend lands assigned by the Great Powers to neighboring states and petitioned for administrative autonomy within the Ottoman Empire. It organized local militias, collected taxes in places, and negotiated with Ottoman commanders and European consuls. Fighting erupted where Berlin's decisions were to be enforced, notably around Gjakova and the Plav-Gusinje district. Ottoman support shifted: tolerated at first as a counter to Montenegrin gains, the League increasingly faced imperial pressure as international demands intensified.

Border revisions with Montenegro shaped the coastal north that Knight describes. The Congress of Berlin initially awarded Montenegro Plav and Gusinje; Albanian resistance there led the Powers to substitute the Adriatic port of Ulcinj (Dulcigno). In 1880 an international naval demonstration by Britain, Austria-Hungary, Italy, France, and others pressured the Porte to deliver the town. After clashes with League forces, Ottoman troops under Dervish Pasha enforced the transfer in November 1880. Nearby Shkodër saw troop movements, refugee inflows, and diplomatic traffic, illustrating how great-power decisions produced local upheaval that a traveler could witness in garrisoned roads, coastal blockades, and wary marketplaces.

To the south, the Greek frontier question added volatility. The Congress of Berlin mandated a rectification with the Ottoman Empire, and the Convention of Constantinople (1881) ceded Thessaly and the district of Arta to Greece, while Epirus largely remained Ottoman. Greek irredentism in Epirus and Albanian defense committees in Janina and Çamëria kept the borderlands tense. Consulates of Austria-Hungary, Italy, Russia, France, and Britain monitored

towns such as Janina, Preveza, and Vlorë, reporting on skirmishes and population movements. These diplomatic presences, visible in flags, escorts, and mail routes, shaped the itineraries, permissions, and protection that a British traveler could secure.

Parallel to armed mobilization, an Albanian cultural awakening gathered force. Diaspora and Istanbul activists founded the Society for the Publication of Albanian Writings in 1879, promoting primers and a unified alphabet. Figures like Abdyl Frashëri, Sami Frashëri, and Pashko Vasa argued for administrative autonomy and language rights, circulating pamphlets through Bucharest, Istanbul, and Shkodër. Ottoman policy still restricted Albanian-language schooling, so education relied on Catholic missions, private tutors, and clandestine readers. Competing scripts—Latin, Greek, and Arabic—complicated printing. Western newspapers reported these debates, giving British readers the context in which Knight's descriptions of schools, scripts, and patriotic songs would resonate.

Travel in the late 1870s combined picturesque hospitality with real risk. Roads were often mule tracks linking market towns such as Prizren, Shkodër, and Durrës; bridges and khans varied in condition; and armed escorts could be necessary beyond garrisoned centers. The oath of besa enabled safe passage, while blood feuds and banditry demanded tact from visitors and hosts. Trade moved leather, timber, and livestock toward Adriatic ports, as refugees, soldiers, and consular couriers shared the routes. British journalism prized first-hand reporting from such frontiers, and Knight—already known as a correspondent and traveler—framed observation with logistical detail, military geography, and interviews.

Albania thus speaks to a Victorian readership preoccupied with the Eastern Question, balancing humanitarian rhetoric with strategic calculations. British policy had backed the Berlin settlement under Disraeli, while public opinion, galvanized earlier by reporting on Ottoman atrocities in Bulgaria, scrutinized subsequent enforcement in Albania and Epirus. Knight's measured depictions of officials, clan leaders, and consuls mirror that tension: admiration for resilience, interest in reform, and attention to coercion. By recording borders in flux and a nationality organizing for autonomy, the book captures a transitional moment that preceded later milestones—such as the declaration of Albanian independence in 1912—without predicting them.

# **Albania**

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## ALBANIA.

### CHAPTER I.

Where to go to?—An unknown country—The expedition—  
Our inventor—Our equipment—The doctor—A useful  
remedy—The start—Venice—Trieste.

One day last autumn I was sitting in my Temple chambers, wondering what I should do with myself in the Long Vacation, when I was aroused from my reverie by the entrance of my clerk.

"Here is Mr. N., sir."

"Show him in."

N. entered, and his chance visit solved my problem.

"Don't know what to do with yourself? Why, I have the very thing for you. Three friends of mine—Brown, Jones, and Robinson—are preparing for a tour in Albania. I saw Brown this morning, and he told me they wanted somebody else to join their party."

To cut the narrative short, I was introduced to Brown, Jones, and Robinson, as I shall call my travelling companions in this book; and it was not long before I decided to join them in a trip which promised to be a very amusing one. My friends were artists, and had chosen this almost unknown country for their summer tour, as being an unexplored mine for their pencils, both as regards magnificence of scenery and picturesqueness of costume. I myself knew nothing about Albania before starting, with the exception of what I had gleaned from "Childe Harold." The lines where the poet sings,

Albania, rugged nurse of savage men[1q],

came to my mind; so I took down Byron from my shelves, and read all that he has to say about

The wild Albanian kirtled to his knee,  
With shawl-girt head, and ornamented gun,

And gold-embroider'd garments fair to see.

The information was scanty, but sufficient to show me that no more interesting country could have been chosen for our expedition. I purpose, in this book, to give a narrative of our wanderings in Montenegro and Northern Albania.

My aim is not at all an ambitious one, and I do not intend to enter very deeply into the history and already over-discussed politics of the races of Eastern Europe, but merely to jot down my own first rough impressions of the country; for my object is principally to show my readers how well worthy of a visit it is, and by describing the ways and means of travelling in it, to encourage and render some assistance to any who may purpose to follow in our footsteps over the Highlands of ancient Illyria. My fellow-travellers proposed to travel in a rough style, not to hamper themselves with servants, and to ride or walk, as seemed best when we reached the country.

The originator of the expedition, Robinson, had evolved an imaginary Albania from his inner consciousness, and was therefore always ready to answer, off-hand, any question we might ask him as to what we should take with us in the shape of baggage, &c.

He always advanced his opinion so unhesitatingly, and would give us so many facts as to the climate, nature of the country and manners of the people, that, till I knew him better, I imagined that he must have either travelled in these countries himself, or at least have had a very dear and confiding friend who had done so, for no amount of reading could have brought about so intimate an acquaintance with the subject.

We were certain to meet with an abundance of big game, he told us, so must each be provided with a rifle—the result was, I armed myself with a Martini-Henry[1]. He procured a Winchester rifle (I think, later on in our heavy marches, he regretted having taken this ponderous weapon). Brown provided himself with a lighter Winchester carbine. Jones wisely took no rifle with him. We each had a good revolver, and our scanty baggage was contained in three saddlebags. Robinson, in addition to his other great qualities, was a wonderful inventor, and insisted on furnishing the expedition with a huge tent, which subsequently was christened "the White Elephant[3]." This was packed for the journey in a long coffin-like box, and many were the wranglings and afflictions over that unfortunate package. Cabmen, railway porters, custom-house officers, police, all alike suspected it, and hindered its unhappy progress in every way. A fantastic axe, a gigantic yataghan-looking knife, and a cooking apparatus, were also devised by our ingenious friend, and constructed under his supervision. Many and many a plan he drew up before he perfected these marvellous inventions, and long was it ere he could find artisans intelligent enough to comprehend and carry them out. We trembled for all these *impedimenta*, and warned our friend that four camels at least would be necessary to transport them. Remonstrances were useless; we were told it was impossible to travel in Albania without these; so, with reluctance, and foreboding of future troubles, we gave in. Accidents of various kinds delayed our start. Brown and myself at last waxed impatient, and after waiting long for our tardy companions, who never would come up to the scratch, but postponed the journey from one day to another (each to be fixed and unchangeable), we decided to precede them, and await them either at some Dalmatian port or in Montenegro. We settled to leave London on the

18th of September, took through tickets to Trieste, and appointed to meet in our war-paint at Victoria Station at seven o'clock in the evening, so as to catch the eight o'clock train for the Dieppe boat.

At seven o'clock the whole length of Spiers and Pond's refreshment-bar at Victoria Station was monopolized by the travellers and the numerous friends who had come to see the last of them. "You are certain to have your throat cut, old fellow, so you might just as well have one last beverage with me," was an oft-repeated and encouraging salute.

I should say that those who were spectators of our departure must have imagined that we were bound on an expedition to the centre of Africa, at least. Our appearance was certainly remarkable. We were arrayed in blue flannel shirts, rough blue pilot suits, and top-boots. Brown, too, had closely shaven his head, which gave him a decided Millbank appearance. Our luggage consisted of a saddle-bag, a rifle, and blanket each. Robinson was anxious for us to take "the White Elephant" with us; we did not see it. I forgot to state that Brown had taken upon himself the charge of the medical department, and had arranged a little box of horrible implements and medicaments. The properties of these I do not think he knew much about. As can easily be imagined, we fought very shy of him in his surgical character throughout the journey. At the last moment we remembered another medicine which might, with advantage, be added to our chest; we had incidentally heard that brandy was a useful remedy in some illnesses. We accordingly sent my clerk over to that excellent tavern, the "Devereux Arms," for a bottle of this fluid; it was lucky we did so, for, curiously enough, both of us suffered on several occasions from those maladies for which it is supposed that beverage is a specific; to such an extent,

indeed, that though none of the other bottles in the chest were even uncorked, this one had frequently to be replenished.

In sixty-two hours from the time we left London we were in Venice. We were haunted by two guilty consciences during the whole of our run across Europe. For we had to cross three frontiers, and were laden with contraband, in the shape of revolvers and rifle cartridges. In consequence of our suspicious appearance, our baggage was generally examined. At Modane, where is the most unpleasant frontier custom-house in Europe, the officers have instructions to confiscate all revolvers. Thus we had to conceal our own on our persons. As they were large, and so caused a suspicious-looking protuberance of our outer clothing, we did not feel quite happy until we were again seated in a carriage, and plunged into the darkness of the Mont Cenis.

From Venice we took the steamer to Trieste—a twelve hours' journey. The boat was crowded. Brown and myself tossed up as to whether he or I should sleep alongside a very fat old lady who obstructed the entrance to one of the two only vacant berths. I won the toss, and ungallantly enough surrendered the place of honour to Brown.

At six in the morning we were alongside one of the quays at Trieste, and landed without being subjected to any custom-house inspection. We put up at the Hôtel Delorme, at which well-known hostelry the Prince of Montenegro had been recently staying, on his return from a visit to the Emperor of Austria at Vienna. We found that an Austrian Lloyd steamer started at five the next morning for the different Dalmatian and Albanian ports; so, as Trieste is not a very interesting place, we determined to steam as far as Spalato, and there

await our companions. We telegraphed to them to that effect.

We wandered about the town sight-seeing the whole day, visited the Lloyd Arsenal, and called on our consul, Captain Burton, the well-known traveller. He gave us some useful information, and recommended us to several people on the Dalmatian coast. He strongly advised us to take plenty of quinine with us, as the fever season had commenced, and tertians had been exceptionally frequent in Southern Dalmatia this year, after the severe drought this part of Europe had experienced.

We took two *sedeae plateae*<sup>[2]</sup> at the Theatre Fenice, the opera for the evening being "Lucia di Lammermoor." The *prima donna* was an English Jewess, Madame Isidore, of whom, as a foreigner, the Triestines seemed to be very jealous, for her excellent singing met with a cold reception. When the opera was concluded, we wandered about the town for a short time. I find in my diary this note: "The beer of Trieste is good."

An English-speaking commissionaire at our hotel had insisted on piloting us about to the different places of interest. He was an amusing man, had tried most professions, had even been a butler in an English family. He had recently been butler, or what here corresponds to a butler, to a Triestine; but, after a few weeks, left his place in disgust, for, as he expressed it, "The Italian no understand life like you English. In cellar no wine. I go to my master. Sar, I leave you."

"Why? what is the reason?"

"Sar, I came here as butler. There is nothing to buttle. I go."

We retired to our beds about one, and enjoyed a few hours' sleep before the time came for embarking.

At three o'clock the next morning we were aroused by our commissionaire, who had promised to see us off. We dressed hastily, and sallied forth in search of an early breakfast before our vessel sailed, and soon found a café which had not yet closed its doors. The waiters, and the place itself, had that disreputable and up-all-night appearance which is only apparent to those who themselves have arisen betimes from sober couches. I think my friend and myself rather regretted that we had so risen, and had not wandered about the town till the hour of sailing; for to turn into bed from one to three is productive rather of discontent with things in general than of that freshness, as of a button, the little cherub proverbially enjoys.

After swallowing our coffee we found our way to our vessel, the "Archduke Paul," bid adieu to our commissionaire, introduced ourselves to the steward, and, selecting two comfortable berths, turned in for a little more sleep.

## CHAPTER II.

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On board an Austrian Lloyd—Voyage to Spalato—The coast of Istria and Dalmatia—Old Venetian cities—Our fellow-passengers—Pola—A Turkish officer—The Morlaks—Why is England a triangle?—Sebenico—Arrival at Spalato.

When I awoke, the sun was shining brightly through the skylight, and the familiar thud of the screw told me we were under way. On mounting to the deck, I found that we were to have a glorious day to enjoy the scenery of the coast. There was not a cloud in the sky, and a fresh and pleasant breeze was blowing off shore. As our vessel was to touch at nearly every harbour of Istria and Dalmatia, we were never more than one or two miles distant from some coast, either of the continent or of the innumerable islands which stud the Eastern Adriatic from Fiume to Cattaro.

Very few English tourists ever wander among these remote provinces of the Austrian Empire, yet they are exceedingly easy of access, and possibly no countries in Europe are so interesting.

The fine scenery, the picturesque costumes and manners of the population, and above all, the remarkable Roman and Venetian antiquities, render them well worthy of a visit. It is surprising indeed that they are so little known.

The Austrian Lloyd steamers run up and down between Trieste and Corfu three times a week, and are as clean and comfortable as any in the world. Again, all countries under Austrian rule are perfectly secure, banditti being entirely unknown. Of course, if any one ventures inland, one must not expect to meet with all the luxuries of civilization; indeed, it must be confessed that even the hotels in the chief seaports, such as Cattaro, would seem rather rough to the sybarite. We met with universal kindness and civility, and even honesty, throughout Dalmatia, from the Austrian officers and officials, as well as from the Slav and Italian population. We found every one anxious to go out of their way to point out to us the lions of the district. The tariff at the hotels is very low, as it is, by the way, on the Austrian Lloyds, where the two really excellent meals provided daily at one and eight, cost one and one-and-a-half florins (paper) respectively. In short, one lives luxuriously for about five shillings a day. The officers are gentlemanly and well-educated men—Dalmatians or Italians, as a rule—and very glad to fraternize with jovially-disposed English passengers. One is almost sure to find one or more who speak English. We took our tickets for Spalato, at which very interesting town we determined to stay for a few days. This is but a two-hundred miles' run from Trieste, but forty-two hours are spent in the passage. For though very little merchandize is taken on board at the several ports touched at, in order to pick up mails and passengers, a most unnecessary amount of time is wasted in each. Of this of course we are not sorry. Now the steamer would anchor off some picturesque little town, such as Pirano, crowned by its ancient fortress—a relic of the great republic which once ruled all this coast—and now bring up alongside the marble quay of some ancient Roman city, such as Pola, with its gigantic amphitheatre reflected on the purple Adriatic.

The scenery of the coast is very beautiful[2q]. The mountains are lofty and fantastically serrated, and cleft into profound fissures and chasms; while innumerable islands surround one on every side, so that one seems to be sailing on a large lake rather than a sea. Each turn round some jagged promontory reveals some new wonder, and there is not a village that is not picturesque and antique, with Venetian fortress or Byzantine church rising from the very water's edge. It is impossible to say what colour the Adriatic is; it is certainly the most chameleon-like of seas, and changes its hue quite irrespectively, as far as I could see, of atmospheric influence, under a sunny sky from deepest violet to most delicate turquoise, but ever beautiful.

However, after a time, there is something remarkably wearisome in this coast; for though the mountains are grandly formed, they are almost universally barren, the vegetation being scant and trees exceedingly rare. The Venetians made the most of their possessions when they had them, and destroyed the once magnificent forests of Illyria in a most ruthless manner. Nearly all the timber for their fleets was procured from these mountains.

The result is, that they are hopelessly bleak and barren, while the country in many places presents for miles inland the appearance of a stony desert. I do not think there is a region in Europe so wild and desolate as the plains in the neighbourhood of Novegrad; however, I believe that further inland, and so almost inaccessible, large and fine forests abound.

The weather was mild enough now, in the latter end of September (80° Fahr. in the shade), but this is a frightfully hot and parched-up country in the summer. The vegetation, where there is any, is sub-tropical; the date-palm, the aloe,

**7** A strong, cold, northeasterly katabatic wind of the Adriatic and neighbouring coasts, noted for sudden gusts and for creating hazardous conditions for small craft and coastal navigation.

**8** An older English spelling of Cetinje, the historic capital and royal seat of Montenegro in the 19th century; it remained the principality's administrative and cultural center in this period.

**9** The book's reference to 'Prince Nikita' denotes the reigning Montenegrin sovereign of the era, generally identified with Nikola I Petrović-Njegoš (Prince from the 1860s and later King); dates and exact usage vary by source.

**10** An international diplomatic conference held in 1878 where European powers revised borders and settlements in the Balkans following the Russo-Turkish War of 1877–78, affecting territories such as Montenegro and Bosnia.

**11** A variant spelling of the Ottoman Order/medal of the Medjidie (Medjidie medals), an imperial Ottoman decoration established in the mid-19th century and often awarded to soldiers and allies, including during the Crimean War.

**12** A londra is a small, flat-bottomed boat or skiff used on Balkan rivers and lakes (notably Lake Scutari/Skadar); locally built and often roughly constructed for passengers and light cargo.

**13** In this context Rieka names a river flowing into Lake Scutari; 'Rijeka' means 'river' in South Slavic languages and the form appears as a place-name in the region.

**14** The Treaty of Berlin (1878) was the international settlement after the Russo-Turkish War that redrew Balkan

borders and awarded territory (in part) to Montenegro and other states.

**15** The Ottoman-era name for the city now commonly called Shkodër or Shkodra in northwestern Albania, located near Lake Scutari (Lake Skadar).

**16** An Ottoman-era term for Albanian mountain warriors and clans; the people themselves often called themselves Skipitars (modern Shqiptar), i.e. Albanians.

**17** George Castrioti (Scanderbeg) was the 15th-century Albanian noble and military leader who led prolonged resistance to Ottoman rule in the 1440s-1460s (traditionally dated c.1405-c.1468).

**18** Zaptiehs (from Ottoman Turkish zaptıye) were local gendarmes or policemen in the Ottoman Empire, commonly assigned to escort duties and public order in rural and provincial areas.

**19** An anglicized nineteenth-century form of Shqiptar (Shqiptar/Skënder), used to refer to Albanians; in contemporary sources it can carry neutral or derogatory connotations depending on context.

**20** A nineteenth-century English epithet for Montenegrins, derived from their country name Crna Gora ('Black Mountain'), used here to mean the people of Montenegro.

**21** A zaptiye/zaptieh was an Ottoman armed policeman or gendarme; in provincial districts they acted as escorts, constables, or order-keepers under Ottoman administration.

**22** A high Ottoman title borne by provincial governors, military commanders, or senior officials; in this context it refers to an authoritative Turkish official.

**23** A khan (caravanserai) was a roadside inn or lodging for travellers and caravans in the Ottoman Empire, providing shelter and sometimes fodder but not always full meals or bedding.

**24** A distilled alcoholic spirit widely consumed across the Balkans and Anatolia; spellings vary (raki, rakı, rakija), and it denotes strong local brandies or anise-flavoured liquors depending on region.

**25** In the narrative a 'londra' is described as a boat that brought provisions across the lake; the term here denotes a small supply or transport craft used on inland waters (exact linguistic origin uncertain).

**26** A frontier town referenced in 19th-century Balkan affairs (often spelled Gusinje today), then a contested locality on the borderlands between Montenegro and Ottoman Albania and a centre of activity for the Albanian League.

**27** An Ottoman-era term for Albanians (from Turkish/Arabic usage); in the text it denotes Albanian highlanders and tribal fighters rather than a modern ethnic label.

**28** A local Muslim chieftain in the account, styled also as Ali Pasha, who led the Gussinje defenders; not to be confused with other historical figures named Ali Pasha and identified here as a regional leader during the League's activity.

**29** In the narrative an Ottoman general and envoy sent by the Porte (the Ottoman government) whose mission to Jakova ended in his assassination; distinct from the 19th-century Egyptian ruler Muhammad Ali of Egypt.

**30** A town in the western Balkans (modern Gjakova in present-day Kosovo) mentioned as a hotbed of nationalist feeling where the envoy Mehemet Ali was killed.

**31** A variant spelling of an Ottoman rank (compare *bölükbaşı*), meaning a company or troop commander/local military head; here used for a tribal or village leader who hosted the travellers.

**32** An older spelling of *Italia Irredenta*, the Italian irredentist movement of the late 19th century that sought the incorporation of territories on the eastern Adriatic and other culturally or linguistically Italian areas into Italy.

**33** A major Adriatic port city; in the 19th century (including 1880) Trieste was administered as part of the Austro-Hungarian domains and served as an important commercial and shipping hub.

**34** A classical-geographical name for parts of the western Balkans in antiquity; it broadly corresponds to territory now occupied by Albania and neighbouring areas of the western Balkans.

**35** The name of a dog in the narrative, described in the passage as 'the poor old dog' whose distress at parting is recounted.

**36** The exact imprint shown in the text: a London-based publishing and bookselling firm active in the Victorian period, known for publishing and importing British and foreign books in the 19th century.

**37** An abbreviation for Knight Commander of the Order of the Bath, a senior rank in a British order of chivalry awarded for distinguished military or civil service.

**38** Short for 'His/Her Majesty's Ships,' the formal designation for vessels of the Royal Navy; used here to indicate the naval ships 'Alert' and 'Discovery.'