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THE EXPANSION OF ITALY



THE EXPANSION OF
ITALY

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FOREWORD

EVERY great country, every active people naturally tends to expand. Expansion may assume many forms, but is in itself no novelty. It has existed from time immemorial, and is neither good nor evil, but inevitable.

In the case of modern Italy expansion has been handicapped by historic and economic difficulties, above all by the fact that before she was able to realize her aspirations towards expansion the most promising territories beyond her own narrow frontiers had been already occupied by other nations. To-day, with her rapidly growing population, the need for an extension of her activities, for a wider field for her people to work in is now more acutely felt. But as she is going through a process of national reconstruction—political, economic and cultural—she certainly does not seek foreign complications, nor does she dream of encroaching on the rights of other countries. The one thing that Italians, the Italians of to-day, do resent is that their legitimate aspirations to expand should be regarded as wicked Imperialism by those who, while professing pacifist sentiments, have practised Imperialism most successfully and extended their political and economic influence over half the world.

Italy is straining every nerve to develop her own none too abundant natural resources to the utmost, and to make the best use of such possibilities for expansion which remain to her. In the following chapters I have endeavoured to set forth the phases

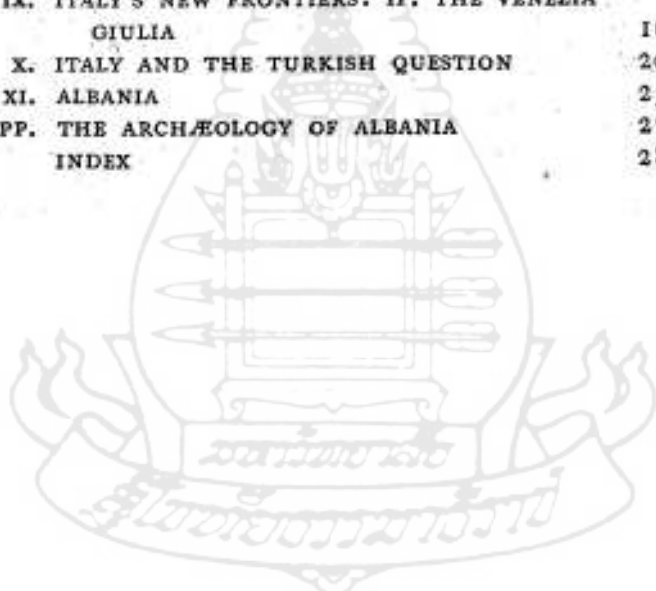
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of her expansion beyond the frontiers within which she was enclosed after national unity had been achieved, and to prove how these efforts are a menace to no one, but are, on the contrary, contributing to the common good of European civilization.



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at the end of the book

CHAPTER I

THE ITALIAN TRADITION IN THE NEAR EAST

IT was in the Near East that the expansion of modern Italy may be said to have begun.

With the fall of the Western Empire, Italy was overrun by Barbarian invaders, split up into innumerable States and Principalities, while the Eastern Empire still maintained its unity, although it, too, was subject to frequent incursions from all sides.

In the early Middle Ages six Italian seaports, whose inhabitants had constituted themselves into autonomous maritime communities, maintained the connexion with the Eastern world, three on the Adriatic—Trani, Brindisi and Taranto—and three on the Tyrrhenian Sea—Amalfi, Gaeta and Salerno. Amalfi was the most important of them all, and after a short period under Byzantine rule, it became an independent republic presided over by a 'doge'. For some centuries it enjoyed opulence and splendour in contrast with the squalid poverty and anarchy of other parts of Italy. Maintaining its freedom amid the clash of Longobards, Greeks and Arabs, its ships ploughed the sea-routes of the Eastern Mediterranean, and it was itself made beautiful by the wealth brought back from distant lands. The *sari* of Amalfi had currency throughout the Levant, its merchants enjoyed special privileges and exemptions in the Byzantine Empire, owned a street at Antioch, called the *Ruga Malphitano-*

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rum, besides houses and churches at Constantinople. It was in that city that the Amalfitano Mauro Pantaleone, asserted by some to have been the consul of the republic in the Byzantine capital, had the bronze doors made for the cathedral of his native town in 1066, and similar doors for the basilica of San Paolo fuori le Mura in Rome.¹ According to William of Tyre it was this same Mauro Pantaleone who built the first Italian church in the Holy Land, named Santa Maria Latina, with a hospice attached to it dedicated to San Giovanni Elemosinario near the Holy Sepulchre. But when Amalfi fell under the Normans its independent activity in the Levant ceased and its importance and wealth declined, while other Italian maritime republics rose to importance.

The Moslem invasion threatened East and West alike, and at one moment seemed destined to spread all over the Mediterranean lands and beyond. Then between the ninth and the eleventh centuries there came a reaction of Christendom against Islam, and this reaction was at first essentially an Italian movement, although afterwards practically the whole of Europe participated in it. Above all, the Italian maritime Republics were prominent in the struggle; they participated in it not only with their fighting forces, but by means of their transport fleets. The fleet of Amalfi assisted Pope Leo IV against the Saracens, and the Venetians, who had suffered defeat at their hand, in 840, retrieved it by their victory in the waters of Taranto in 867. Venice until then had been like Amalfi a vassal of the Eastern Empire, but now she acquired her *de facto* and subsequently her *de jure* independence, and even came to the rescue of that Empire when it was menaced by the Normans and the Saracens, its own navy being in a state of

¹ A. Bernardy, *La Via all' Oriente*, p. 16.

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decadence. As a reward the Emperor issued a Golden Bull conferring on the Venetian merchants important privileges in his dominions. They were permitted to trade throughout the Empire and to possess wharves, churches, warehouses, etc., in Constantinople and other cities. They even obtained what would to-day be regarded as an essentially unfair privilege, i.e. the taxing of the merchants of the rival maritime republic of Amalfi, who were obliged to pay the tax to the Church of St. Mark in Venice!

One of the earliest warlike enterprises of the Venetian fleet was the repression of piracy along the Dalmatian coast. In A.D. 1000 the great doge Pietro Orseolo II attacked and captured the stronghold of the piratical Narentans Curzola and Lagosta, thereby affirming for the first time Venetian supremacy in the Adriatic and assuming the title of Duke of Dalmatia.

Two other maritime cities now came into prominence both in trade and warfare—Pisa and Genoa. Like Amalfi and Venice, they played an important part in the struggle against the Moslems in the Mediterranean. In 1228 the Genoese allied themselves with Count Bonifacio of Tuscany in the expedition against the Saracens in Corsica, Sardinia and North Africa, and over a hundred years later they lent assistance to the Emperor Nicephorus Phocas against the same enemy in Calabria. In 1004 Pope John XVIII, who advanced certain claims to the island of Sardinia, preached a crusade against the Saracens then holding it, and promised to grant it to whomsoever drove them out. The Pisans and the Genoese fitted out a joint expedition for that purpose, and after a protracted struggle succeeded in their task and liberated Sardinia from Moslem rule. Later we find the Pisans and the Genoese, in alliance with the fleets of Amalfi, Gaeta and Salerno, participating in an expedition against

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the Saracens at Mehedia in Tunisia, between the Gulf of Gabès and that of Hammamet; the enemy fleet was destroyed and the Sultan forced to pay an indemnity and accord customs exemptions to the victors.

In the twelfth century Pisa fitted out a fleet of 300 sail, commanded by the warlike Archbishop Pietro Moriconi, against the Saracens in the Balearic Isles, and here again the Christians proved completely victorious. The enterprise is picturesquely described in the *Carmen in victoriam Pisanorum* and in the *Liber Maiolichinus de gestis Pisanorum illustribus*. It is interesting, as Prof. Pietro Silva notes,¹ that the Balearic poem shows traces of the dawn of an Italian national pride, and that the people of Italy are described as Latins, for we read of *Latius vigor, latie urbes, Latii heroes*.

But the Pisans were not concerned with warfare alone in their relations with the cities beyond the sea. The Pisan Burgundio, who had been delegated by the Republic in 1135 to ratify a treaty with the Eastern Emperor, was instructed to secure a copy of the Pandects of Justinian, which was preserved in the city as one of its greatest treasures. Another treasure of a different kind is the Holy Thorn from the Saviour's Crown preserved in the exquisite little church of Santa Maria della Spina on the banks of the Arno at Pisa,² while the earth in that wonderful epic of Italian mediæval art, the Camposanto, was brought from Calvary to Pisa on Pisan ships.

There were important Italian settlements in Egypt, with which country the Italian merchants had long carried on an active trade. The Pisans appear to have been the first in the field, and a treaty between them and the Egyptian Sultan was concluded in 1154. When Amalric of Ascalon succeeded Baldwin III as King of Jerusalem in 1163, he sent an expedition

¹ *Il Mediterraneo*, p. 106.

² A. Bernardy, *op. cit.*, p. 22.

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against Egypt, and the Pisans afforded him valuable assistance; Alexandria was captured in 1167, and although the Pisans had, as we have seen, traded with the Moslems in Egypt, Amalric gave them full freedom of commerce in 1169 in Alexandria and for all the territories which God should give him in Egypt. He failed to conquer that country, but the Pisans secured privileges at Acre instead. Benjamin of Tudela describes the prosperous Italian settlements at Alexandria, whence precious Oriental goods were embarked in exchange for timber and iron from Europe for ship-building. As there was more or less endemic warfare between Christendom and Islam, occasionally obstacles were placed in the way of this traffic, especially when it assumed the character of contraband. When in 1187 Saladin attacked Jerusalem trade with Egypt was suspended, but it was afterwards resumed with the permission of Pope Innocent III himself, iron and other ship-building material being alone excluded. Early in the thirteenth century there were no less than 3,000 European merchants, mostly Italians, in Alexandria, and Venetian and Apulian ships visited Damietta regularly. Papal prohibitions were disregarded out of thirst for profit, and Western traders did not hesitate to sell even iron and timber to the Infidel Egyptians.

'If the story of Pisan colonization,' as William Heywood writes—and his remarks apply likewise to the Venetians, the Genoese, and other maritime communities—is, for the most part, a sordid chronicle of commercialism and greed, the pages on which it is written are indelibly watermarked with patriotism and valour. No war was ever waged nor any colony planted for material ends alone. Not the cry of "new markets" merely, but the adventurous heart of the race, lured on by the magic of the sea, its receding horizon, its danger and its change, spread the glory and terror of the Pisan name from the shores of Syria to the Pillars of Hercules.¹

¹ W. Heywood, *Pisa*, p. 108.

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The Barbary coast also attracted the adventurous Italian merchants, mostly Pisans, who had a consul elected by the Curia maris, eke Tunis, but with the decline of Pisa the Florentines took their place, while the Venetians were the first to establish a regular service of merchant ships with that part of Africa.

A great impulse was given to the growth and progress of the Italian maritime republics by the Crusades, which indeed would not have been possible without the fleets of Venice, Pisa, Genoa and other Italian cities. The feudal States of Northern and Western Europe sent their men-at-arms to the Holy Land, either directly by sea, or via Constantinople and thence through Anatolia or along the coasts; if they went by sea they had to be conveyed on Italian ships, and if by land they were dependent on those same ships for their communications, supplies and reinforcements, while the Italian ships defeated the formidable Saracen fleets and enabled the Crusaders to hold out in those distant lands. As a reward the merchants of the city-republics obtained the right to establish colonies in the lands which they had helped to wrest from the Infidel for Christianity; these colonies enjoyed exemptions from the many fiscal tributes applied to other traders, and many citizens of the republics received important appointments in the newly-created Latin kingdoms of the East. Daiberto or Dagobert, Archbishop of Pisa, who had taken part in the First Crusade with 120 Pisan ships, was created first Patriarch of Jerusalem, and the Pisan merchants secured a part of the port of Jaffa. The Genoese, who had enabled Bohemond to capture Antioch, received houses, churches and a *fondaco* in that city, as well as fiscal exemptions. In 1101 the Genoese under Caffaro captured Cæsarea, and as a reward each of their soldiers received 48 soldi of silver and two pounds of pepper. Further privileges

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were granted them for their share in the capture of Acre and Tripoli. The Venetians for their assistance in the capture of Tyre in 1124 secured one-third of that city and settlement in others, including a quarter in Jerusalem as fine as that of the King himself, besides of course the usual fiscal exemptions.¹

Thus in the twelfth century there were flourishing Italian settlements throughout the Holy Land, Syria, Cyprus, etc., and Italian maritime communities were the intermediaries between the Eastern and the Western worlds. These settlements were of the most varied nature, and often comprised agricultural land and rich farms, as well as shops, warehouses and churches. Important Italian colonies had also been established in various parts of the Eastern Empire, especially at Constantinople. But the excessive power acquired by these communities and the overbearing spirit of some of them, ended by arousing the hostility of the native Greeks, and towards the end of the century there was an outburst of savage xenophobia against them. In 1171 no less than 10,000 Venetians were thrown into prison and their property was seized, and eleven years later there was a general massacre of Italians and other Latins. But in 1187 the Emperor Isaac Angelos granted full compensation to the Venetians and in 1192 to the Genoese and the Pisans. Nevertheless, the ire of Venice against the Eastern Empire was not appeased, and was one of the causes which induced the Republic to lend her assistance to the Fourth Crusade. Venice undertook to convey 9,000 knights, 20,000 foot soldiers, 4,500 horses, and provisions for a whole year to Constantinople, at the price of 85,000 Cologne marks, and was to be rewarded in addition with half of all the conquests achieved. As the money was not forthcoming, the

¹ Silva, *op. cit.*, *passim*.

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Doge Enrico Dandolo agreed to the postponing of the payment on condition that the Crusaders, before proceeding to Constantinople, should help him to reduce Dalmatia which had rebelled against Venetian power. This was agreed to, and the Doge Enrico Dandolo, with the help of the Crusaders, captured Zara and restored Venetian rule in Dalmatia.

The Venetians then transported the Crusaders to Constantinople and played an important part in the siege and capture of the city and in the setting up of the Latin Empire in the place of the Greek. The reward they received was indeed magnificent. It consisted of 'one-quarter and a half (i.e. three-eighths) of Romania', as the Empire was called, comprising a large part of the Imperial city, where their headquarters were of regal splendour, various ports in the Morea, including Corona and Modona, called 'oculi capitales communis Venetiarum', Gallipoli, Rodosto, Heraclea, Durazzo, Arta, Yanina, and various points in Crete and a number of islands in the Ægean. With these possessions, in addition to the settlements in Syria and Palestine, Venice held the trade-routes between Europe and the Near East, and while the crusading nobles ruled precariously over vast dominions and enjoyed the splendours of feudal pomp, the Venetians alone were in a position to 'deliver the goods' and thereby acquired vastly increased power and prestige and immense wealth, which was long to outlast the Latin kingdoms of the Levant.

In this Latin Empire the Venetians, who had so materially helped to create it, were all-powerful, and their interests in the city were so vast that at one moment there was actually a proposal to transfer the seat of the *dogado* there. The Venetian *Podestà*, assisted by councillors and judges, ruled over all the possessions of the Republic in the Empire, and enjoyed

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an authority actually superior to that of the Emperor himself; he even succeeded in inducing the sovereign to refuse access to the Empire to citizens of all States who happened to be at war with Venice.

Many of the Ægean islands and also some points on the Anatolian coast were entrusted by Venice and the other maritime republics to feudal lords and adventurers. The Venetian families of Sanudo were lords of Naxos, the Dandolo of Andros, the Querini of Stampalia.¹ We find a certain Plebano of Pisa established as lord of Batrun near Tripoli, the Gattilusio of Genoa at Enos, Imbros, Lesbos, Thasos and Tenedos, the Cattaneo at Mitylene, the Zaccaria at Phocæa, also Genoese families.

Genoa, who was Venice's bitter enemy and rival for the Levant trade, consequently assisted the Greek Emperor of Nicæa, Michael Palæologus, in his campaigns against the Latin Emperor at Constantinople, and secured from him the promise that should he succeed in driving out the Latins he would hand over to it all the Venetians' possessions. In 1261 he did in fact capture Constantinople with the help of the Genoese, and his allies received as their reward Galata, then the Venetian quarter in the capital,² and various towns and concessions in the Straits, the Black Sea and Lesser Armenia. The Black Sea was destined to become one of the chief fields of commercial activity of the Genoese, who extended their settlements and trading stations as far as the Sea of Azov. Their establishments at Caffa, Balaclava, and above all Tana at the mouth of the Don, which they wrested from the Tartars, attained great importance. They even penetrated inland into the Ukraine and Poland, and eastwards to the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea. Indeed,

¹ A Querini-Stampalia foundation and library still exist in Venice.

² Subsequently under the Turks it became the Greek quarter.

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all over this part of the Levant we find traces of Genoese influence, and to this day many castles in remote parts of Anatolia, even to the river Euphrates, are called 'Djeneves'; even though at times this attribution may be doubtful,¹ it shows how deep an impress this maritime people left.

The Zaccaria had ruled at Old Phocœa on the Anatolian coast since 1275, and one member of this great Genoese family, Martino called himself 'King and Despot of Asia Minor', and is said to have even aspired to the throne of Constantinople. In 1304 the Zaccaria extended their rule to the island of Chios. In 1329 the Emperor Andronicus drove them from that island and obliged those of them who ruled at Old Phocœa and the Cattaneo at New Phocœa to render him homage. But, soon after, the Genoese under Vignoso recaptured Chios and the two Phocœas; the expedition had been fitted out by a group of wealthy Genoese families, who had constituted themselves into a sort of trading company called a *Maona*, and the Republic conferred on this *Maona*, which took the name of *Maona di Giustiniani*, from that of the chief family associated in it, the lordship of Chios. Another *Maona* exploited the island of Cyprus.

But the Venetians, although their absolute predominance of the days of the Latin Empire had departed, still retained many of their possessions in the Ægean and the Adriatic, and were destined to continue to be a great and wealthy nation when their rivals had declined and even lost their independence.

With the fall of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem the Italian colonies in Palestine and Syria withdrew to Cyprus and Rhodes. Here a new Italian trading community now came into prominence—the Floren-

¹ Thus at Tokat between Samsun and Sivas the castle is known as Djenevess.

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tines. Although Florence was not a maritime city and had no mercantile fleet until in the fifteenth century it had captured Pisa and absorbed the remnants of the sea-borne trade of that city in its decline, Florentine merchants and bankers did business with many parts of the world, thereby acquiring great wealth. The Knights of St. John, after settling in Rhodes, had so indebted themselves towards the Florentine bankers, that the island became almost a fief of the Bardi, the Peruzzi and the Acciaiuoli, and later of the Provençal bankers as well.

Merchant ships in the Mediterranean travelled in convoys escorted by warships, much as was done during the latter period of the World War. The convoys sailed at fixed epochs; they usually departed from Venice and the other Italian ports in the spring and the autumn, returning in the summer and the spring. As a rule winter voyages were avoided, but according to Jacques de Vitry the Genoese were such enterprising seamen that they did not hesitate to sail even in winter. According to the Doge Mocenigo, Venice at the beginning of the fourteenth century possessed 3,000 small ships with some 17,000 sailors, 300 larger ships with 8,000 sailors, and 45 galleys with 11,000 sailors on the seas, while 16,000 men were employed in the arsenal. For the maintenance of her communications and the defence of her dominions and settlements scattered all over the Adriatic, the Ægean, the Straits and the Black Sea, the Republic organized a service of patrol squadrons. The Capitano del Golfo, with headquarters in the Ionian Islands, was responsible for the safety of the merchantmen in the Adriatic and along the coasts of the Morea, as far as Corona and Modone. The various Venetian feudal lords in the Ægean islands provided for the security of vessels trading between the Morea and the Dardanelles, while

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the Straits, the Sea of Marmara and the Black Sea were patrolled by the Black Sea squadron. Every year six mercantile fleets were organized and despatched to the Black Sea, Greece and Constantinople, the Syrian ports, Egypt, the Barbary coast, England and Flanders. The State built the ships and let them out to the highest bidder, and they were all built according to prescribed Government measurements, because ships of identical build would presumably behave in the same way under the stress of weather and could thus be held together more easily, and because the consuls in distant ports could keep a supply of spare parts—masts, sails, rudders, cordage, etc.—to make good eventual losses. The six State fleets numbered 330 ships with 36,000 men. The routes and sailing instructions were minutely laid down by the Senate.¹

The chief exports from the Italian cities were cloth and other products of Italian industry, and the imports were wool from North Africa, alum, iron, wheat from the Sea of Azov and the Crimea, Asiatic spices, sugar, Russian hides, cotton, muslin and velvet from Damascus, Chinese silks, precious stones, coral and even slaves. The streets of the Italian trading cities were bright with the colours of Oriental splendour, such as are described in d'Annunzio's *Francesca da Rimini*, and there one encountered many strange exotic types attired in outlandish garb. The Pisan bishop Donizone in the twelfth century was scandalized that the streets of his native town were crowded with Turks, Jews and Infidels. The spectacle offered by these motley crowds must have been very similar to the sights one used to see at Constantinople on the Galata Bridge before the Kemalist régime.

In addition to those of the maritime cities another

¹ Horatio Brown in the *Cambridge Modern History*, Vol. I, ch. viii.

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Italian fleet plying the sea-routes of the Mediterranean was that of the Normans of Sicily. Roger II had created a powerful navy in the middle of the twelfth century, with which he fought against the Byzantine Empire and the Moors on the African coast. In 1146 the Normans captured Tripoli in Africa, and although they lost it again, they also seized and held Corfu, Negroponte (Eubœa) and other points in Greece. William II occupied Thessalonica, threatened Constantinople, and sent a fleet against Saladin under Margherito or Margaritone of Brindisi, known as 'the lion of the sea', who, with the help of the Genoese, inflicted various defeats on the Saracens. When the Latin Principalities in Palestine and Syria fell, it was on Italian ships that the English and French knights were able to return home, and it was those same Italian ships which made possible the establishment of a new Latin Kingdom in Cyprus under Guy de Lusignan.

During the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries another more terrible Moslem onslaught fell on the Christian lands of the East—that of the Ottoman Turks, sweeping on irresistibly from the heart of Asia; and the remaining Christian States in that part of Europe and Asia collapsed one by one before the invading hordes. In 1356 the Turks seized Gallipoli, and a hundred years later Constantinople itself fell, in spite of its heroic defence, in which the Genoese under Giustiniani played the principal part. In the sixteenth century the Turks extended their operations ever farther west, until it seemed as though the whole of the Mediterranean lands were destined to fall into their hands. Again it was the Italian fleets which offered the stoutest resistance, and after a series of vicissitudes a new maritime crusade was realized by Spain and the various Italian States, and a great Christian fleet

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commanded by Don John of Austria, with Genoese ships under Gian Andrea Doria, Venetian under Barbriigo, Papal under Marcantonio Colonna, and other contingents, defeated the Turks off Lepanto in 1571; and although the victory was not adequately followed up, it served to arrest the Ottoman advance and broke the naval power of the Turks.

The Turkish conquest of the Byzantine Empire resulted in the loss of the Venetian and Genoese possessions in the Levant, which, if those two splendid cities had not been such bitter rivals, might have been saved. While Genoa lost everything, Venice retained the Ionian Islands, Candia and a few other points. Trade with the East did not cease altogether, and indeed the Turkish Sultans, anxious to encourage it, granted to the Western merchants much the same privileges as those accorded them by the Byzantine Emperors, and if the colonies and settlements of the old type were no longer possible under Turkish rule, foreigners continued to enjoy exemption from local jurisdiction and from the application of the local laws and to be ruled according to their own statutes and customs; thus the system of the Capitulations was evolved. But at first the Turks tended to grant greater favours to Italian cities other than Venice and Genoa with whom they were so often at war. Florence, Ancona and Ragusa profited by the change, and later on Tuscany, now united into a single State, came to play an ever more important part in the trade of the Levant. The Knights of St. Stephen to some extent replaced the older fighting orders in the struggle against Moslem piracy.

But the importance of the Mediterranean was rapidly diminishing, and the discovery of America and of the Cape route to India hastened the decline of the erstwhile splendid maritime city-republics of

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Italy. Venice had, it is true, a brilliant revival of military and naval activity in the seventeenth century. The twenty-four-year-long 'War of Candia', fought for the defence of her last possession in the Ægean, is one of the most glorious episodes in the history of the Most Serene Republic. Many splendid victories were won, of which the most famous was that of Lazzaro Mocenigo in 1656, when he attacked and sank or captured eighty Turkish ships and returned to Venice, covered with wounds and having lost an eye, trailing the captured Ottoman standards across the Lagoon. Later he tried to take the offensive against the Turks in their very capital, and conducted another fleet towards Constantinople. But after encountering disastrous storms and losing many ships, his own flagship was destroyed by an explosion of the powder magazine, and he was killed while sailing through the Dardanelles.

Another marvellous Venetian expedition against the Infidel was that of 1684, commanded by a member of another family of intrepid sea-dogs, Francesco Morosini, surnamed 'Il Peloponnesiaco', from his conquest of the Morea. The history of this campaign is depicted in a series of paintings in the Museo Civico of Venice, where many trophies of Morosini's victories are preserved, while the lions adorning the Venetian arsenal are also part of the booty brought back from Greece. One unfortunate effect of this expedition was the damage wrought to the Parthenon by Morosini's bombs. But it is some satisfaction to remember that if those bombs were hurled by the guns of an expeditionary force of which Morosini was commander-in-chief, the operations against Athens were conducted by one of his subordinates, not a Venetian, but the German mercenary von Königsmark, and that it was a gunner from Lüneburg who fired the

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fatal shot—perhaps a spiritual ancestor of those other German gunners who destroyed another of the world's most exquisite works of art, the Cathedral of Rheims. It seemed as if Venice were actually about to re-establish her rule in the Levant and become once again really the *Dominante*. But the hope was not destined to be realized, and at the Treaty of Passarowitz in 1718 the Republic lost all that Morosini had conquered, and in the East only retained the Ionian Islands and some strongholds on the Albanian coast. In 1784 and 1785 it made its final maritime effort with the expeditions of Emo against Tunis. Then came the Wars of the French Revolution and the infamous betrayal of Campoformio, when the Republic ceased to exist.

At the Restoration of 1815 Venice and what had remained of her possessions (except the Ionian Islands, which were placed under British protection) were handed over to Austria, and the first Imperial Austrian fleet was in reality nothing more than the old Venetian fleet reborn. Its official name was in fact '*Imperiale e Regia Veneta Marina*',¹ and it was not until after the episode of the Bandiera brothers in 1844 that that fleet was reorganized and given a more thoroughly German and subsequently Germano-Slav character. But even when flying the *Doppelaar* and fighting the Italian fleet in 1866 and 1915-18 Italian was still one of its languages.

Of the other Italian States only the Kingdoms of Sardinia and of Naples retained navies and mercantile fleets of some importance, that of Sardinia had indeed developed considerably with the annexation of Genoa and the consequent extension of the Kingdom's seaboard. None of the Italian States had possessions in the Levant, but there were still considerable Italian

¹ There is a stopping-place for the *vaporetti* beyond the Riva degli Schirvoci still called *Veneta Marina*.

ITALIAN TRADITION IN THE NEAR EAST communities in the various *Stati di Levante*, as the seaports of that area were and are still called. In 1825 the Sardinian fleet gave a good account of itself in the attack on Tripoli, then a nest of Barbary pirates. Had Sardinia been a stronger Power she might perhaps have established herself then on the North African coast instead of having to wait for nearly a hundred years before undertaking that enterprise.

Although Italy was of course the one all-important field of diplomatic, political and eventually warlike activity for Sardinia, her rulers did not altogether neglect the Levant with its age-long Italian traditions. The decision of Victor Emmanuel and Cavour to intervene in the Crimean War not only served to force the Italian question into the forefront of European diplomacy, but also to make of the little Sub-Alpine Kingdom the representative of those traditions. Immediately after the end of the war, in 1857, it was suggested that, in view of the construction of the Suez Canal, Sardinia should occupy a strip of the Red Sea coast, and in 1861, after the creation of the Italian Kingdom, Baron Ricasoli, Garibaldi and some other prominent public men advanced a proposal to the same effect. But Italy was then almost isolated, on bad terms with most of the European Powers and looked on by all of them as a 'revolutionary' State, and she was moreover too weak and too obsessed by other more urgent internal problems to develop an active Mediterranean or colonial policy. Indeed, during the first decades of her existence as an independent and unified State she was in no position to make her influence felt outside her own borders. This fact proved most unfortunate, as it was just during that period that nearly all the remaining colonial territories were occupied or earmarked by the other Powers who were already developed and capable of extending their overseas activities.

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But the results of the Russo-Turkish War of 1878 and of the Berlin Congress made public opinion realize that Italy was being left deplorably behind in the struggle for political influence and for securing trade markets. While victorious Russia extended her already immense dominions at the expense of Turkey, Austria, who had taken no part in the struggle, acted the rôle of war profiteer and acquired Bosnia and the Herzegovina, thereby establishing herself as a dominant influence in the Balkans, and even Great Britain secured Cyprus in order to guard the flank of her route to India and strengthen her position in the Mediterranean. Italy came away from the Congress with 'clean hands', otherwise 'empty hands'.

Italian public opinion, or at least that part of it which was interested in international politics, was deeply disappointed at the results of the Berlin meeting, but, although conscious of the country's need for expansion, had as yet only vague and undefined aspirations, except in one direction—Tunisia, a question which will be dealt with in another chapter.

It was the French danger, enhanced by the seizure of Tunisia, which drove Italy into the otherwise unnatural Triple Alliance. But that treaty only secured her against a French attack on her frontiers and offered her no support in the Mediterranean, nor even against an attack by Austria. France, on the other hand, now suggested to Italy that an Italian occupation of Tripolitania might restore the balance of power in the Mediterranean and compensate her to some extent for the French occupation of Tunisia, and at the same time Great Britain, in view of her disputes with France concerning the African colonies, invited Italy to establish herself 'somewhere in the Red Sea'. This second proposal was immediately taken up by Italy's 'Minister of Foreign Affairs, Pasquale

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Stanislao Mancini. It was this statesman who made the celebrated and much-ridiculed phrase that Italy would 'find the keys of the Mediterranean in the Red Sea'. The claim was not quite so paradoxical as it sounded, as can be gathered from the text of the speech in the Chamber in which he made it. 'You fear', he said, 'that our action in the Red Sea may distract us from what you call the true and important objective of Italian policy, which must be the Mediterranean. But why do you not recognize instead that in the Red Sea, the nearest to the Mediterranean, we may find the keys of the latter, the road which shall lead us back to an effective safeguarding against any new disturbance of its balance?' Mancini's idea was that the occupation of a stretch of the Red Sea coast should merely be a prelude to a wider action, whereby Italy, in agreement and collaboration with Great Britain, might extend her sphere of influence through the Sudan, and Darfur, to the Libyan hinterland, and thus secure an outlet on the southern shores of the Mediterranean by advancing from the south and the south-east.

The course of events was to impede the execution of this ambitious plan, and, as we shall see, Eritrea, as the new Red Sea colony was called, failed to prove a suitable field for the settlement of Italy's exuberant population.

Year by year Italy was becoming ever more awake to the essential importance for her of the Mediterranean, especially of its eastern basin, so full of Italian memories and traditions, and when in February, 1887, the Triple Alliance Treaty was renewed, a special Italo-German agreement was signed, securing Germany's solidarity with Italy even in the case of any further French expansion in North Africa and providing for the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Near East and especially with regard to the Turkish coasts and

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islands in the Ægean. An Italo-Austrian agreement was concluded on the same day providing that if it should prove impossible to maintain the *status quo* in the Near East any modification of it should be preceded by a mutual understanding between the two Powers based on reciprocal compensation. Just before the renewal of the Triplice a British-Italian convention had also been concluded whereby it was agreed that the *status quo* in the Near East should be maintained as far as possible, and that if this should not prove practicable all modifications of it detrimental to the interests of both Powers should be prevented, that Italy should support British policy in Egypt and Great Britain that of Italy in North Africa and particularly in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. By this understanding Great Britain adhered to the system established by the Triple Alliance as far as concerned the Mediterranean. When the Triplice was again renewed in 1891 Germany undertook to support the maintenance of the *status quo* in North Africa and, should the *status quo* in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica be inevitably modified, to support Italy should she decide to occupy those provinces.¹

These undertakings on Germany's part were, however, in contrast with the Empire's policy of supporting Turkey which was then beginning to take shape, so that when the time did come Italy found neither assistance nor sympathy in Germany.

¹ Silva, *op. cit.*, pp. 361-2.

CHAPTER II

THE EXPANSION OF THE POPULATION.

AT the time when the other Great Powers of Europe were already definitely constituted into national units and were able to turn their attention to the acquisition of new fields for the expansion of their population and trade and of new sources for the supply of the foodstuffs and raw materials which they needed, Italy was still in the birth-throes of her formation as an independent State. Moreover, Italy's natural handicaps were not then realized, and there was among Italians a widespread conviction that their fatherland was endowed by nature with every blessing of climate and fertility, and that only evil governments and the errors of mankind had prevented them from exploiting their resources and becoming as rich as, or richer than, their neighbours. Consequently the necessity for securing new territories wherein Italians could settle was ignored, and all the still available colonial lands were seized or ear-marked by other more far-seeing and powerful nations, even by those who already possessed vast colonial dominions. Italy's traditional field of expansion in the Near East was, as we have seen, now closed to her.

When the Italian Kingdom was first constituted (1861) the population problem did not appear so urgent. The total area of the country in that year was 248,180 square kilometres, with about 22 million inhabitants, and the resources of the country were

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deemed sufficient to provide for a population of such frugal habits as the Italians, although many millions lived in great poverty and some were on the verge of starvation, especially in the Southern provinces.¹ In 1866 Venetia was added to the Kingdom, and in 1870 the province of Rome; but although the total area of the country was enlarged by 38,895 square kilometres, the newly added provinces did not offer any possibility of demographic expansion, as they were, as densely populated as the rest of the country and were not richer in natural resources, except that in the Lazio there were still some wide uncultivated areas which could not then be exploited inasmuch as they were infested with malaria.

Agriculture and industry began to make progress in the years following unification, but the country proved to be far poorer than had at first been believed, and there was far more headway to be made before it could hope to compete with the more advanced economic units in the rest of Europe. While half the country's area is mountainous and incapable of profitable cultivation, large sections of naturally fertile plain were subject to disastrous inundations and to malaria, which no one then knew how to combat, while other parts suffered from long periods of drought which nullified the advantages of such fertility as their soil possessed.

The population, which was naturally healthy, except in the malarious districts, and strongly prolific, increased rapidly. Large families were the rule, and mortality was diminished by improved sanitation. Thus the 25,000,000 of 1861 (this figure included the inhabitants of the provinces annexed in 1866 and 1870) grew to 28,000,000 in 1881, to 32,000,000 in 1901, to over 34,000,000 in 1911. The increase

¹ For details of Italy's economic conditions, see my volume, *Italy* (Ernest Benn, Ltd., 1929), ch. xii. and xvi.

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was held up by the World War, and in 1918 and 1919 there was an actual decrease, but immediately after it recommenced, and by 1928 the total was close on 41,000,000. Even the additional territory acquired as a result of the War was not naturally rich and was already inhabited by as large a population as it could support.

Thus the economic development of the country failed to keep pace with the increase of population, and Italy possessed no colonies where her sons could settle and prosper and contribute to the progress of their country. At the same time vast and thinly populated areas beyond the seas were being opened up and were in desperate need of settlers to develop their unexploited natural resources, and other countries in Europe also needed more labour than they could supply themselves to work their mines and industries, and build the roads, railways and houses which they required. France, Germany, Belgium, Luxemburg possessed rich mineral deposits needing miners to work them, and the industries which had arisen as a result of the existence of those minerals needed workmen. Switzerland, although poor in natural resources (water-power was then only in its infancy), was in a most favourable geographical situation, and being in a position to create an important tourist industry, as well as to develop textile and mechanical industries, needed foreign labour to build her roads, railways and hotels. Everywhere in Europe there was a strong demand for stone-masons and bricklayers for the innumerable new buildings which were rising up.

Beyond the seas, in addition to the vast industrial and railway development of the United States, there was great dearth of agricultural labourers to cultivate the prairies of the Middle West, the fruit orchards of California, the cotton plantations of the Mississippi

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valley, the pampas of the Argentine, the coffee plantations of Brazil. In other continents, too, there was an awakening of agricultural, industrial and constructive activity, and everywhere the demand was for more labour.

The countries lacking labour naturally offered high wages for it, whereas in many parts of Europe, notably in Italy, where labour was abundant, wages were low. Thus workers from all parts of Italy were attracted to the lands of higher wages on both sides of the Atlantic, and the migration was encouraged and increased by the activities of labour agencies and steamship companies and their agents. Soon there was hardly a large city and not many small ones in Europe or America where there was not a large or small Italian community, and some American cities—such as New York and Buenos Aires—had more Italian inhabitants than any city of Italy except the very largest.

The emigration movement assumed different aspects in different parts of Italy. In the North it was directed chiefly to Central and Western Europe and to South America and California, whereas in the South and in Sicily the emigrants went chiefly to the eastern United States, and to a lesser extent to the Argentine. Emigration to European countries was in the great majority of cases of a temporary nature, and the workers would go abroad regularly every year for a few months, returning home in the winter, and almost always ended by settling permanently in Italy, although there were of course numerous exceptions, especially in France and Switzerland. Emigration overseas was predominantly permanent, in the sense that the majority of the Italian migrant workers who went to America, although they might return home many times in the course of their lives, ended by remaining permanently abroad

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and being joined by their families. Here, too, there were many exceptions, and in every small town or village of Southern Italy or Sicily (the emigrants from the large cities were few) there was a group of 'Americans'.

The emigration movement, especially that from the South, was an irregular, unconscious attempt by the Italian masses to solve their economic difficulties themselves, without the help of the Government or any organization, and although it was not really a solution but only a palliative, it assumed such vast proportions as to become a problem in itself, attracting the attention of the authorities and of students of economic and social questions and of philanthropists. The number of Italian emigrants did not become very large until the latter half of the nineteenth century. By 1881 it had already reached 135,000, but from that year onward it grew rapidly and regularly, except for occasional set-backs due to economic crises in immigration countries, until by 1901 it amounted to 533,000; in 1913, the last year before the War, it was no less than 872,000. The percentage of returned emigrants was always fairly high, but whereas before 1886 the emigrants to European countries were the most numerous, after that year, with the development of the movement in Southern Italy, overseas emigrants became the most numerous, thus accentuating permanent as compared with temporary emigration. Even among the permanent emigrants the number of those who became naturalized in their new homes was small, and those who did so were usually not the best. But their children, born abroad, were *ipso facto* citizens of the new land, that being the prevailing juridical principle on nationality in all parts of America.

The results of this vast demographic movement were of many kinds. For the immigration countries

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they were wholly beneficial, for without the Italians the development of those lands would have been greatly retarded and in some cases rendered impossible, as neither by natural increase nor by immigration from other lands could they have secured the necessary amount of labour. The native inhabitants could moreover devote themselves to the more agreeable, healthy and interesting forms of work, leaving all the hardest, most dangerous and unpleasant to the foreigner, chiefly the Italian,¹ and in times of trade depression masses of Italians would flock homewards and never come upon the rates or the charity of the immigration country. Finally, while only the strongest and healthiest emigrated, those who after having landed became unfit through disease or accident went home to die or to linger as invalids maintained by their relatives or charity in Italy.

For Italy the results were in part beneficial. By rarefying labour wages were forced up, and the money which the emigrants saved and brought or sent home, old debts were paid off, usury greatly reduced or even eliminated, and large estates tended to be split up not by agrarian reforms or confiscatory legislation, but by the natural law of supply and demand; the peasant who has saved up 10,000, 50,000 or 100,000 lire abroad wants to build a house and buy a bit of land, and as he does not count the value of his own labour, he is ready to pay a higher price for the land than it is worth in the market. Emigration has also taught Italians, who were not in the habit of travelling, what the rest of the world was like.

¹ In the United States during the early decades of their economic growth the hard work was done by the Irish and the Germans; later the Italians took their place, later still the Greeks, Syrians, Slavs, etc. Since the restriction of immigration negroes and Mexicans have been called in.

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But the drawbacks were many and serious. *The existence of large masses of Italians scattered all over the world might have increased Italian influence, if these communities had been well balanced with an adequate proportion of the different classes and categories. Instead of this they were composed almost exclusively of one class—that of unskilled or semi-skilled working-men, the most ignorant and backward predominating, while the educated professional classes and higher bourgeoisie were either wholly lacking or represented by infinitesimal elements and usually by the least desirable individuals. The capitalists, by whom the Italian labourers were employed, the engineers, experts, managers and foremen who 'bossed' them, were nearly all foreigners, and the community at large, which derived the maximum benefit from their labour, was predominantly foreign. This was a serious drawback from many points of view, as it tended to produce the conviction, both among the Italian workers themselves and the foreigners among whom they lived, that the Italians were an inferior race destined to be the drawers of water and the hewers of wood for the richer and in every way superior foreigner.

Sentimentalists, who studied the emigration problem as a sort of charitable institution, were ever obsessed by the fear that the rich immigration countries would one day close their doors to the Italian emigrants whom they regarded as peris at the gate of Paradise, pleading for admission, and prophesied dire consequences for Italy if doors were closed. To the average democratic politician the want of national dignity implied by this attitude meant nothing, and as late as 1919 we find certain writers proposing that the whole of the Eastern Mediterranean lands should be handed over to Great Britain and France, as capitalist nations,

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who would exploit them by means of Italian labour placed at their disposal by the kindness of the Italian Government. It is difficult to conceive of a more abjectly defeatist attitude and one more calculated to depress the national spirit and confirm all foreigners in their contempt for Italy and the Italians.

Italy had, it is true, some colonial possessions of her own. But those on the East coast of Africa acquired in the 'eighties and 'nineties of the nineteenth century were unsuited for white colonization, as we have seen, and Libya, acquired in 1911, was not yet exploited.

The War brought about a profound change in the emigration question and in the public's attitude towards it. In the first place, while hostilities lasted, emigration was almost wholly suspended, and at the same time masses of Italians who had already migrated abroad came flocking home, thereby constituting for the country a problem of considerable gravity. Then the victory gave the nation a new confidence in itself, a new belief in its future destinies, and public opinion hoped and believed that at the Peace Conference Italy would receive the rewards solemnly promised to her by her Allies and to which her sacrifices entitled her; they consisted in part of important extensions of her colonial territories where her emigrants could settle under the Italian flag and work for the benefit of Italy and the Italian people. But to the chagrin and disappointment of the Italians nothing of the kind occurred, and the colonial territories were distributed among the countries which already possessed vast empires, and Italy secured only a tiny extension in Somaliland. Even in Europe the other victorious Powers secured far wider and above all far richer territories than Italy, and among those Powers were some who had contributed little or nothing to the

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common victory, and many of whose citizens had fought to the bitter end on the opposite side. This injustice rankled deeply and still rankles in the heart of every Italian and is responsible for that sense of exasperation which to many foreigners seems so dreadfully wicked. Some foreigners, moreover, absolutely fail to understand the causes of this feeling and ignore the bare facts of the situation. A typical instance of this crass ignorance was supplied some time ago by a distinguished British journalist, who certainly ought to have known better.¹ This egregious publicist actually had the face to state in the columns of a London evening journal that the Italians had been 'rewarded by a larger share of the spoils than any other Power!' As I pointed out in an answer published by the courtesy of the editor in the same paper, the true facts are as follows:

As a result of the War, Great Britain acquired 989,000 square miles of territory, with 9,323,000 inhabitants, France 253,000 square miles and 6,466,000 inhabitants, Rumania 68,790 square miles and 9,289,000 inhabitants, and Serbia 59,197 square miles and 7,887,600 inhabitants. Against this, Italy's 'larger share of the spoils' consisted of 23,726 square miles and 1,672,000 inhabitants. Moreover, the territories acquired by or (in the case of Great Britain and France assigned under mandates to) the first four Powers are for the most part very rich in minerals and other raw materials, whereas those assigned to Italy (on whom no mandates were conferred) are to a large extent mountainous and sterile.

After the Armistice emigration from Italy recommenced on a considerable scale. From 28,000 in 1918 the figure rose to 253,000 in 1919 and to 614,000 in 1920. Then it dropped to 200,000 in

¹ 'A. A. B.' in the *Evening Standard*, Aug. 20, 1929.

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1921, increased steadily to 364,000 in 1924, and decreased not less steadily since that date, until in 1928 it was only 150,000, the lowest for nearly half a century. Nor would the figures for the post-war period have been anything like so high, especially in the years from 1919 to 1924, had it not been for the great demand made by France for the reconstruction of the devastated area. Moreover, during the last few years the percentage of emigrants returning to Italy has been very high. In the period from 1900 to 1914, out of a total of nearly 9 million emigrants, between 5,300,000 and 5,400,000 returned, whereas in the five years from 1924 to 1928 the total number of emigrants was 1,287,000, of whom 779,000 returned.

The reduction of emigration was due to a variety of causes. One of them was the restrictive legislation enacted by the United States out of fear that the mass of Anglo-Saxons, Germans, Irish, Jews, Scandinavians, Italians, Slavs, Armenians, Syrians, etc., which make up the complex population of that country, might be deprived by any further influx of Italians. This reduced Italian emigration to that country to practically nothing at all. Then there was the diminished power of absorption of foreign labour in certain other countries to which Italians had in the past gone in large numbers, notably Switzerland, Germany, the Argentine and Brazil. This was only in part set off by the increased emigration to France in the years from 1919 to 1924. There does not seem any likelihood that Italian emigration to foreign countries will again show a large increase in the near future.

It was this closing of the outlets for Italian labour, together with the necessity of reconstructing the country after the War—not only of reconstructing what had been destroyed, but of making good those

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pre-existing deficiencies in the economic and social structure of the country which the War had brought to light—which intensified the effort to exploit all the national resources to the fullest extent and in the most intelligent way and to find outlets and forms of employment for the population other than emigration. The rise of Fascism transformed the attitude of the Government and public opinion towards the problem, for Italy was no longer content to be the universal provider of millions of hefty workers to fill up the gaps in countries with a declining birth-rate, to exploit their insufficiently inhabited colonial possessions, and to present them with ready-made citizens. The Fascist idea is that the Italian owes his first duty to Italy, that a large and growing population is an asset and not a handicap, and that every effort must be made to find remunerative employment for her sons, either in Italy or abroad, but that if they do go abroad they must as far as possible be kept in touch with the mother country. When I say Fascist I mean modern Italian, for to-day the immense majority of Italians, even of those who dissent from some aspects of the internal policy of the Fascist Government, fully endorse its foreign and emigration policy.

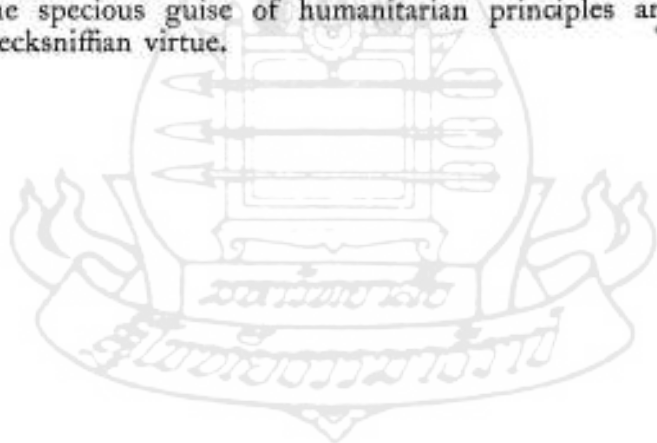
The easiest solution would be for Italy to acquire colonies suitable for white settlers. No other country possesses such a mass of hardy, hard-working, adaptable intelligent workers suitable for colonial life as Italy. Unfortunately she has only a small colonial territory suitable for emigration.

Internal development still offers a promising field. The problem of the marshlands and malaria is being seriously tackled with increasing success. A further form of expansion is foreign trade. While much progress has been achieved, the drawbacks are many and serious, as Italy is poor in raw materials, and here

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again the absence of colonies is a grave handicap, as, apart from their advantages as territories for agricultural settlers, colonies would both absorb a large portion of Italy's export trade and supply her industries with the bulk of the raw materials which they require.

If Italy has gained a considerable measure of success in developing such resources as she possesses, it is due not to the kindness of Nature, as in the case of many of her foreign competitors, but to the untiring efforts of her sons and to the discipline which they have imposed upon themselves and without which those efforts would be useless. For the present she must do without colonies, or at all events make the best of an inadequate colonial dominion. But if in the future there is a reshuffling of colonial territories, mandated or otherwise, Italy is determined to have her proper share and not to let herself be again bamboozled as she was at the Paris Peace Conference by a combination of rival Imperialisms camouflaged under the specious guise of humanitarian principles and Pecksniffian virtue.



CHAPTER III
ITALY IN EAST AFRICA
A. ERITREA

WHEN Italy first began to think seriously of acquiring colonial possessions, she found that nearly all the most suitable territories had been annexed or ear-marked by other Powers. There remained, it is true, certain parts of East Africa still available, and it was thither, as we have seen, that Pasquale Stanislao Mancini turned his attention. In the early 'eighties Italy proceeded to occupy certain points on the Red Sea coast which appeared capable of economic development. The Bay of Assab had indeed been occupied as early as 1869, but only as a coaling station for the Florio-Rubattino steamship company; and owing to the objections raised at the time by Great Britain, Turkey and Egypt, it was not formally annexed until 1880. Massawah and other places were occupied during the following years, and in 1890 these various possessions were united into a single colony under the name of Colonia Eritrea or Red Sea Colony.

It was hoped and believed at the time that the new possessions would prove suitable for colonization by white settlers, and that at least a part of the stream of Italian emigration might be deflected thither from the foreign lands which had hitherto attracted it. Although the coastal area and the lowlands generally are tropically hot, on the uplands of the interior the climate is moderate and healthy. But the wars with Abyssinia made colonization difficult, and the defeat of Adua,

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which the Government of the day saw fit to leave unavenged, although the reserves under General Baldissera had victory within their grasp, put an end to all ambitious schemes. The colony came to be looked upon in Italy as a white elephant, and was not evacuated only on account of the loss of prestige which evacuation would have involved. Public opinion for many years had ceased to take any interest in Eritrea, and almost tried to forget its very existence. There was during that period a reaction against all thought of colonial expansion throughout Italy, not only among the Socialists and extreme Radicals, who wished to concentrate public attention on social reform alone, but even among many of the Conservatives and Moderates of Northern and Central Italy, who saw in overseas activities nothing more than costly and unremunerative adventures, which absorbed Italy's none too abundant capital needed for internal development, and which might involve the country in dangerous international complications.

The Prime Minister at that time, Francesco Crispi, was one of the few statesmen since Mancini who realized the importance of expansion for Italy, but he had come before his time, and the nation was not educated up to his ideas. The defeat of Adua brought about his fall, and he retired from politics a broken man. Many of his opponents actually regarded the disaster with satisfaction just because it had caused Crispi's fall, so little did they appreciate its deleterious effects on the country's prestige.

At the beginning of the present century, when, with the general increase of prosperity and of cultural development in Italy, the idea of colonial and economic expansion revived, attention was turned rather to the possibilities of North Africa than to those of the almost forgotten Red Sea colony. But the Libyan War itself,

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which was the outcome, as we shall see, of Italy's schemes of expansion in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, provided unexpected evidence of the utility of Eritrea in at least one respect. From the early days of the occupation a considerable number of Eritrean natives and Abyssinians from over the border had enlisted in the Italian army, and indeed the great bulk of the Italian garrison consisted of Ascari, as they were called. They proved excellent and faithful soldiers, even when engaged in fighting against men of their own race. The Italian officers and N.C.O.'s in command of Ascari units rapidly succeeded in inspiring in them the utmost devotion and discipline. On the battlefield of Adua, after only a few years of Italian rule in Eritrea, round the body of every dead Italian officer were found groups of dead Ascari, who had fallen fighting to defend the life of their white commander. Between 1896 and 1911 the organization of the Ascari was perfected and extended, so that when the Libyan War broke out it was possible to employ them in North Africa, where they greatly distinguished themselves in action. After the end of the war some of them were brought to Rome as a reward, and received a welcome no less rousing than that which greeted the home-coming of the metropolitan regiments. In the World War they did not serve in Europe, as Italy was averse to employing coloured troops against white foes; but they continued to perform garrison duties in Eritrea and Libya, and afterwards helped to reconquer the parts of the latter colony which had been evacuated during the War.

In the meanwhile the internal development of the colony had been proceeding satisfactorily, almost unnoticed by the immense majority of the Italians. The administration was improved and simplified, economic progress fostered, a railway built, the port of

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Massawah provided with modern appliances, and other public works were undertaken. The total import and export trade of the colony has expanded since the War; the caravan trade, which in 1921 amounted to 45,000,000 lire, had grown to 127,000,000 in 1928, while the sea-borne trade had increased from 96,000,000 to 289,000,000. The total area of the colony is 119,000 square kilometres; its population in 1928 was 510,175, of whom 3,650 were Italians.

The original idea of making Eritrea a field for white colonization had been practically abandoned, as even its more temperate zone is not wholly suitable for that purpose. The scheme, warmly advocated by the late Baron Leopoldo Franchetti, of colonizing the uplands with Italian farmers and labourers, was retained as a possibility for the future on the statute book for many years. It involved a measure of expropriation of the land belonging to the natives, which was always possible in territories formerly under Moslem law, and a beginning was actually made towards carrying it into practical effect. But owing to the discontent it aroused among the natives, who were becoming more sedentary, the colonization scheme was adjourned *sine die*. Under the present régime the law itself has been amended and all idea of white colonization abandoned, except in so far as concerns the exploitation of large agricultural concessions by white owners. The uplands are now reserved *de jure* as well as *de facto* for the natives, whereas the lowland area, which does not interest them in the same way, as its development would require costly and extensive drainage and reclamation works, is to be set aside for exploitation—not colonization—by whites employing natives.

The drainage and irrigation works have been undertaken by the Government, especially in connexion with the waters of the River Gash, and the hydric part

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of the scheme at Tessenei has now been carried out. An agreement has been concluded with the Sudanese Government, whereby the Sudan may utilize the waters of the Gash on payment of an annual fee; the amount thus collected goes towards the expenses of the development scheme. The land reclaimed and improved will be divided into concessions and granted to private individuals or land companies constituting a development consortium, after the method generally practised in Italy in analogous circumstances.

Cotton has long been regarded as the most important crop in this part of Africa, and Italy, like other countries, hopes some day to emancipate herself from the cotton tribute to the United States. The Government began by creating an experimental cotton plantation of 1,000 hectares; the yield was about 9 quintals (a little less than one ton) of raw cotton, corresponding to 3 quintals of fibre, per hectare. It is hoped that the cotton area may be extended, and that the total yield will eventually be from 40,000 to 50,000 quintals of fibre. Besides the Government plantation, there are many private cotton-growing enterprises in various parts of the colony.

One serious difficulty is the supply of labour. Eritrea is not densely populated (about 3.3 inhabitants per square kilometre), and until recent times some 15,000 of the best workers were recruited for the army, which comprised twenty battalions of Ascari, several of whom were on duty in Libya. Formerly, too, it was possible to secure a considerable contingent of recruits in Abyssinia, whose Government encouraged its subjects to enlist under the Italians so as to acquire an advanced military education. But this no longer occurs in the same measure as before, so that recruiting is to a large extent limited to Eritrea, and even here there are other difficulties; owing to the

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increased prosperity of the colony, the native population is becoming ever more sedentary and addicted to agricultural pursuits, and no longer regards the army as the most dignified as well as the most lucrative profession. The Italian authorities have placed a limit on the recruiting of Eritrean Ascari for Libya, and only those needed for local defence will eventually be recruited. The two North African colonies, moreover, now possess, as we shall see, well-organized native forces of their own.

Besides cotton, Eritrea produces large crops of oleaginous seeds (sesamum, linseed, castor oil, etc.); which are exported abroad in considerable quantities. The natives are experts in cultivating them, and this class of produce has the further advantage of being less subject to violent fluctuations of the market than is the case with cotton.

On the eastern slopes tobacco, the pineapple, the banana, the American aloe, indigo and other plants flourish. On the high tableland, besides the oleaginous plants mentioned above, cereals, lentils, beans and other vegetables are grown. Among the varieties of cereals most extensively cultivated are wheat, barley and *dura*; the average yield of wheat per hectare is about 8 quintals, or rather less than that of the less highly productive areas of Southern Italy, where it ranges from 9 to 10 quintals. The fruit trees which grow most plentifully are the medlar, the pomegranate and the almond. In the eastern valleys only India corn and *dura* are grown, while on the western border between the rivers Gash and Setit is the chief cotton belt. In parts of the country are forests of dum palms, and the curious baobab tree, whose branches sink into the ground and form fresh roots, also abounds. The eastern lowlands are tropically hot and almost rainless, so that irrigation works on a large scale would be

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necessary for their development. At present works of this kind are being carried out only in the western lowlands, where, although the climate is almost as hot as in the east, the nights are much cooler and benefit is derived from the rains of the adjoining upland area.

There are also schemes for creating coffee plantations, and there is already a promising beginning in this connexion, as there are two rainy seasons in certain parts of Eritrea.

The Red Sea Colony is not important merely for its own sake. It is in a certain sense a pivot whence Italian commercial influence may radiate outwards into various neighbouring countries. Eritrea is the natural outlet for the trade both of certain parts of Abyssinia and of the opposite Arabian coast, and a transit market for goods between the two countries. Parts of Abyssinia are more easily reached from the French colony of Djibuti and from other places than from Eritrea, but a considerable area of that Empire is more accessible from the Italian colony and finds its natural outlet through Massawah with its well-equipped port connected by rail with the interior. Relations between Italy and Abyssinia have for many years been on a satisfactory footing, and it is Italy's interest that Abyssinia should remain an independent State and increase in prosperity and civilization.

Mancini, when Minister of Foreign Affairs, had grasped the possibilities of trade with Arabia, but he was not listened to at the time, and although this trade continued to develop during the succeeding years, it is only quite recently that its importance has been realized in Italy. Sig. Ferdinando Martini, when Governor of Eritrea, was the first to establish relations with the Yemen, then under Turkish rule, and many natives of that territory enlisted in the Italian army. In past times Italians had taken an interest in the commercial

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possibilities of the Yemen, beginning with the mysterious Bolognese traveller of the fifteenth century, Lodovico de Varthema, of whom very little is known, but who seems to have been the first European to explore the country. Another Italian who in more recent times visited the Yemen, was Renzo Manzoni, nephew of the famous man of letters, Alessandro Manzoni; he lived there for a considerable time and wrote what is probably the best account of the country. A third Italian, the trader Giuseppe Caprotti, spent thirty years at Sanaa—the only European then in the town. Through the intervention of a learned Italian prelate, Monsignor Achille Ratti, now better known as His Holiness Pope Pius XI, and the Oriental scholar Eugenio Griffini, Caprotti's valuable collection of Arabic MSS. was secured for the Ambrosiana Library at Milan.

Trade between Eritrea and the Yemen amounts to 50,000,000 and 60,000,000 lire per annum, and the 1926 agreement between the latter country and Italy, consecrating an existing state of things, offers promises that in future the development of trade relations will be even more important. Owing to its proximity to and its traditional economic connexion with the Yemen, Eritrea tends to become an intermediate market for the exports from that State to a large part of the Western world and the Mediterranean lands.

B. SOMALILAND

In the early 'eighties, while various Italians were exploring remote parts of East Africa, Somaliland, whence those regions were most accessible, was under several different rulers. Northern Somaliland was occupied by the British who had replaced the Egyptians in the Gulf of Aden area; the coast farther south was held by the native sultanates of Obbia and the

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Mijurtins, while the Benadir coast was under the Sultan of Zanzibar; in the interior there were only wild native tribes.

Immediately after the Italian occupation of Massawah an Italian cruiser visited the Somali coast to explore the mouth of the Juba River, and in May, 1885, a treaty securing commercial advantages for Italy was concluded with the Sultan of Zanzibar. Three years later the Sultan of Obbia applied for and obtained Italian protection. A similar agreement was arrived at in 1889 with the Sultan of the Mijurtins. But it was not until March 14, 1891, when Captain Filonardi effected a landing near the village of Atel, that any part of the coast was definitely occupied by the Italians.

For the expansion of Italian trade and influence in that part of Africa the occupation of the Benadir coast was necessary, and after protracted negotiations with the Sultan of Zanzibar and the British Government, which by the treaty of June 13, 1890, had established its protectorate over the Sultanate, an agreement was concluded on July 22, 1892, whereby the administration of the Benadir ports was entrusted to Italy. This administration was at first carried on by a chartered company founded by the above-mentioned Captain Filonardi, and afterwards by another similar concern known as the *Società anonima commerciale italiana del Benadir*. The Protectorate went through many vicissitudes, and there was trouble with the Mad Mullah and with certain native tribes, especially the Bimals, by whom Sig. Cecchi, Italian Consul at Zanzibar and Commissioner for Benadir, was murdered, together with the rest of his party, in November, 1896. The following year Captain Bottego, who had previously explored the Upper Juba region, and more recently Lake Regina Margherita and the sources of the rivers Omo, Sagat and Upper Sobat, was murdered,

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together with his companions, near Gidan in the Lega country; the scientist Dr. Sacchi, who had been detached from the Bottego expedition, shared the same fate. These discoveries entitle Bottego and his companions to a high rank among explorers.¹

The new Benadir company took over the administration in January, 1900, and undoubtedly contributed to the development of the Protectorate, but public opinion after Adua had, as we have seen, lost interest in colonial undertakings and the Government did not lend the company adequate support. The measures adopted for the suppression of the slave trade brought about a fresh insurrection of the Bimals in 1904, and although the rebels were defeated in the action at Damane on January 23, 1907, the necessity of organizing more adequate defensive measures and of hastening the progress of the Protectorate induced the Italian Government to take over the administration from the company. The whole area was given colonial status, and the native levies were replaced by more regular forces, partly native and partly Eritrean, but commanded by Italian officers. During the years 1907-1909 various military expeditions were sent into the interior to put down the rebellions of the Bimals and other tribes and to extend Italian influence along the banks of the Webi Shebéli, and by 1913 the colony was sufficiently pacified to enable the authorities to send some native battalions to co-operate in the occupation of Libya, where they did very well. The World War left Italian Somaliland undisturbed.

After the War, by the terms of the Milner-Tittoni agreement (September 13, 1919), a modification of the Somaliland frontiers in favour of Italy was promised by Great Britain, as a small compensation to the former

¹ One distinguished member of the party, Lieutenant (now Admiral) Vannutelli, is still living.

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against the vast acquisitions of colonial territory secured by the other victorious Powers. No actual cession was, however, carried out at the time, and even after the Milner-Scialoja agreement of April, 1920, which provided for the handing over to Italy of an area on the right bank of the Juba, which was of great importance to the tribes on the left bank for the grazing of their cattle. But it was stated by Lord Milner that the agreement would not come into operation until all the other outstanding questions left over by the Peace Conference were settled. The matter was raised again in 1924, and the British Government of the day (that of Mr. Ramsay MacDonald) at first wished to make the cession conditional on the settlement of the Dodecanese question. The Italian Government, however, insisted that there was no connexion whatever between the two questions, and Great Britain in the end accepted this view. The agreement was signed on July 15, 1924, by Mr. MacDonald and the Marquis della Torretta (Italian Ambassador in London), and a year later the territory in dispute was handed over to Italy and annexed to Italian Somaliland.

In the course of the years 1925 and 1926 the effective occupation of the Nogal territory and of those of the Sultanates of Obbia and of the Mijurtins was carried out, and the whole area united into a single colony.

Italian Somaliland has an area of 500,000 square kilometres, with a total population of approximately 900,000. During the last few years it has been developed, roads have been built, the principal towns modernized, and above all agriculture improved. The waters of the two chief rivers, the Juba and the Webi Shebeli, have provided possibilities for land reclamation and irrigation on a large scale. The natives cultivate maize, *dura*, beans, bananas, etc., but the best hope for the future prosperity of the colony lies in the rational

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cultivation by modern methods of cotton, cane-sugar, tobacco, kapok, sesamum and the castor-oil plant on the alluvial soil of the river basins. The country is not suitable for white labour, but agricultural enterprises on a large scale under white supervision and employing native labour have proved possible and profitable. The most important of these undertakings is the Società agricola italo-somala, operating in the Shidle area along the Webi Shebeli, founded and managed for some years by H.R.H. the Duke of the Abruzzi, cousin of the King of Italy. The concession is 25,000 hectares in extent, and some 5,000 hectares are already under cultivation and yield excellent crops, especially of cotton, and plants have been erected for the extraction of cotton seed, sesamum and castor oil, while a sugar refinery and a distillery utilize the products of the sugar-cane. A Government experimental farm has been created at Genale near Merca, on the initiative of the former Governor, Count De Vecchi di Val Cismon,¹ covering some 21,000 hectares of land. A system of concessions has been established, and the land is being gradually assigned to the various concessionaires. It is hoped that in time a considerable proportion of Italy's cotton requirements will be supplied by Italian Somaliland,² and also a part of her requirements of tropical oleaginous plants. The colony is of course by no means so rich in these products as the many vast and wealthy colonies possessed by Great Britain, France and Belgium, but Italy is doing her utmost to put such possessions as she has to the best possible use.

¹ The Duke of the Abruzzi's fine record as admiral during the World War is well known. Count De Vecchi was also a very gallant officer, and later was one of the *Quadrumviri* of the March on Rome. He is now Italian Ambassador to the Vatican.

CHAPTER IV

THE TUNISIAN PROBLEM

To understand Italy's present position in the Mediterranean a few words of explanation on the situation of the Italians in Tunisia are necessary. Relations between Italy and Tunisia date back to the remotest ages, and, owing to the proximity of the two countries, have never been interrupted, as we have seen in a previous chapter. During the whole of the nineteenth century there has been a constant stream of Italian emigrants into Tunisia. In the first half of that century these emigrants had belonged to two groups—one of them consisting of enterprising merchants and business men from Leghorn, mostly Jews, who had been attracted to the country by its economic possibilities, and the other of certain political refugees who in the Risorgimento period found a haven in Tunisia. In the later decades of the century a large influx of South Italians, especially Sicilians and a few Sardinians, came to constitute the bulk of the Italian community. By 1881 it was variously estimated at from 17,000 to 30,000, and was certainly larger than any other group of Europeans in the Regency.¹ The leading professional men and merchants were Italians, and there were flourishing Italian schools, associations and institutions of all kinds, many prosperous Italian businesses involving the investment of much Italian capital.

¹ The first figure was a French estimate, the second that of the Italian Consulate-General.

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The Italians in the Regency were on excellent terms with the local Government, of which the Bey was the head, and with the native population as a whole. Their status was based on the Treaty of Establishment concluded between the Italian Government and the Bey in 1868, which more or less reproduced the clauses of the various earlier treaties between the latter and the ex-Italian States.

Italy, however, was not the only country interested in Tunisia. France, too, had long been connected with the Regency; after the conquest of Algeria her possessions adjoined those of the Bey, and French business interests were considerable. As long as Italy was divided into many small States, the political importance of France, a great, united and powerful nation, stood very much higher, but while she had important investments in the country, the number of her citizens was far smaller than that of the Italians. With the unification of Italy the difference in the respective prestige of the two countries was lessened, but in the meanwhile France was coming to cast her eyes on Tunisia as a field for her own expansion. At first there was no idea of establishing a French Protectorate there, and in 1864 Napoleon III had actually suggested to Italy that she should occupy it as a diversion from the troublesome Roman Question; but at the time, although no Italian would have regarded a French occupation with favour, Italian statesmen were averse from all overseas adventures. In view of this fact Prince Bismarck saw in Tunisia a useful element for promoting Franco-Italian dissensions. While he, too, had at first advised Italy to occupy it, when in 1875 a new Franco-German War seemed imminent and Italy had rejected his proposal for an Italo-German alliance against France, he gave the same advice to the latter Power, so as to distract its thoughts from European

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ambitions and the prospects of a war of *revanche*, and above all to make Franco-Italian friendship impossible. Great Britain had supported this suggestion, but for different reasons—she wished to prevent France from supporting Russia, and also thought that, once France were in possession of Tunisia, she would have less objection to the British possession of Cyprus.

After the Berlin Congress of 1878, when Italy was rendered in-potent by the danger of a new conflict with Austria and by her difficulties with France, who had fomented a recrudescence of the Roman Question, the moment seemed ripe for a French seizure of Tunis. When it was known in Italy that such a possibility was in the air, public opinion became seriously concerned, as, if it were realized, Italian interests would be seriously compromised, the position of the large Italian community in Tunisia rendered precarious and the security of the South Italian coasts jeopardized. Diplomatic action was taken, but three successive French Cabinet Ministers repeatedly assured the Italian Ambassador that France had no such intentions. The British Government, to whom Italy had appealed against the danger of French aggression in Tunisia, showed little interest in the matter. What Italy wanted was not to occupy Tunisia herself, but that it should remain an independent State, where under the capitulatory régime Italians could work and prosper without risking the loss of their nationality and be on a footing of equality with the nationals of other Powers. France then enjoyed the same conditions as Italy; yet she wanted not equal opportunities for all, but an exclusive and privileged position for herself. For some time she hesitated as to what her line of policy should be, as she knew that an occupation would create a difficult international situation and produce great irritation in Italy, but the way was being carefully prepared by the

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French Consul-General at Tunis, Roustan, in opposition to the action of his Italian colleague, Macciò. Then the more or less imaginary incursions of the Krumir tribes on the Algerian border were conveniently invented to provide a pretext for military action. Tunisia was invaded from Algeria, while the fleet occupied the harbour of Bizerta which was badly coveted as a good naval base.

The Bey had no wish to be 'protected' by France or by any other Power, but he was helpless to resist French arms. A prominent Italian resident in Tunis, who was a personal friend of the Bey, urged upon him to avoid meeting the French general and offered to hide him in Tunis for a week or two in order to gain time and enable European diplomacy to intervene on his behalf, as the French Government still hesitated. The Bey had agreed to this plan, but at the last moment a lady friend of his married to a Frenchman persuaded him to remain at his palace of the Bardo, where he received the French general and by the treaty of 1881 signed away his independence. A second treaty completing the first was concluded at Marsa the following year, and a French Protectorate was definitely established over the Regency.

The Italo-Tunisian treaty of 1868 remained in force and was renewed periodically, so that Italian citizens in the Regency continued to remain under the capitulatory régime, except as regards the consular judicial administration, which Italy herself surrendered in 1883. But in 1896 the French Government forced the Bey to denounce the treaty of 1868 as well as an analogous treaty concluded with Great Britain. The latter Power raised no difficulties, as nearly all her citizens in Tunisia were Maltese, and accepted the suppression of all their privileges except the right of maintaining their British citizenship. Italy, however, strongly

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objected to French action, owing to the large number of Italian citizens affected, and finally, after protracted negotiations, arrived at a *modus vivendi* with France whereby Italians not only retained their nationality, but all Italian existing institutions (schools, hospital, societies, etc.) were to remain untouched in the *status quo*. At that time the Italians in Tunisia were 40,000 and the children in the Italian schools 3,686.

This solution was not at all acceptable to France, who was determined to make Tunisia to all intents and purposes a French colony and convert all its European residents into French citizens liable to serve in the French army. The French authorities particularly resented the existence of Italian schools which were and are the chief bulwark of the Italian character of the Italo-Tunisians. The prolificity of the Italians provided the said authorities with a means of pressure in favour of Gallicization of which they were not slow to take advantage. While the Italian school population increased from under 4,000 in 1896 to 10,000 in 1928, the existing schools soon proved inadequate for it, but the French authorities interpreted the *status quo* clause in the most restrictive sense, and absolutely refused to allow the building of a single new school or even the increase of the existing schools; not one new class-room could be added, nor a new story raised. Every form of chicanery was resorted to in order to make the continuance of the Italian schools impossible and force Italian parents to send their children to the French schools, where they could be more easily denationalized. The Italian community is deeply attached to its schools, and although the children have to be packed as tight as sardines in them—sometimes as many as 100 or more in one small class-room—they never fail to attend. The conditions were certainly unhygienic, but the French authorities did not

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take this fact into consideration, and when it was brought to their attention the only reply was that the children might go to the French schools; if they did not, so much the worse for them. There are, as it is, over 9,000 Italian children in the French schools owing to lack of accommodation in the Italian ones.

The schools in question are maintained by the Italian Government. But the community was ready to provide private schools as well, and the Dante Alighieri Society (which was founded for the diffusion of the Italian language abroad) offered funds for building schools of its own. But Senator Flandrin, while Resident-General, by the decrees of 1920 and 1921 made the opening of Italian private schools practically impossible, for while they were not expressly forbidden, every form of pretext which the most pettifogging bureaucratic mind could devise was resorted to in order to prevent the opening of a single private Italian school.

Nevertheless, the *Italianità* of the Italo-Tunisians was still safeguarded to some extent by treaty rights. But towards the end of the World War (in September, 1918) the *modus vivendi* of 1896 was denounced by the French Government. The moment chosen was a singularly inopportune one, as it suggested, the Allied victory being then practically a certainty, that France had committed this unfriendly act as soon as she no longer needed Italian help. It was not succeeded by a new convention, as would have been the natural and obvious sequel, but is renewed every three months. It continues to exist simply at the good pleasure of the French Government, which at the end of every tri-monthly period can refuse to renew it. Time after time the Italian Government has proposed the conclusion of a new agreement to last for a reasonable period—five or ten years—but France has always opposed a *fin de non recevoir* to any suggestion of the kind.

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By the laws of 1921 and 1922 it was enacted that any child born in France or in a French colony or protectorate should be *ipso facto* a French citizen. This provision did not apply to Italians as long as the *modus vivendi* of 1896 was in force, but it did apply to British citizens, and this time the British Government raised objections as far as Tunisia and Morocco were concerned and brought the matter before the League of Nations and the Hague Court. But before a final decision was arrived at the two Governments came to an agreement and the petition was withdrawn.

As the 'automatic' naturalization does not apply to Italians, the French authorities brought and continue to bring every form of pressure to bear in order to secure as large a number as possible of individual naturalizations of Italians. All restrictions and obstacles to the securing of French citizenship were removed, every inducement of an economic nature was offered to those who apply for it, and recourse is had to every form of unfair discrimination against those who do not. Concessions of land, lucrative contracts, all forms of social assistance, etc., are showered on the naturalized and refused to the foreigner. Higher wages are paid to French citizens than to others performing the same work, and the recalcitrant are often liable to summary dismissal against which there is no redress. In the railway service dismissals of Italians are very frequent, except of men who happen to be indispensable, and in that case, while allowed to retain their jobs, they are subjected to every form of indignity and humiliation. There are Italian railwaymen who are paid 500 francs a month, while Frenchmen (natural born or naturalized) receive 1,190. In the tramway service Italians receive 16 francs a day, and Frenchmen 20.

In the early years of the French régime the number

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of Italians applying for French citizenship was very small—only a few thousand did so in thirty-four years. After the new laws came into force and the systematic campaign of propaganda, pressure and chicanery was adopted, the numbers increased to a certain extent, some Italians being unable to resist the economic disabilities entailed by refusing to naturalize.

In 1921 the total population of Tunisia was just over 2,000,000. Of these 156,135 were Europeans, the Italians numbering 84,799, the French 54,476, the rest made up of Maltese, Russians, Poles, etc. By 1926 the total was 2,159,709; and the Europeans 173,281; the French had increased to 71,020, the Italians to 89,216, while the Maltese had decreased from 13,250 to 8,396. The French had thus increased by 16,500 in five years; this increase was made up of 11,265 naturalized foreigners and 5,235 natural-born Frenchmen. The Italians who had naturalized amounted to 3,850, i.e. an average of 770 per annum—not a very imposing result after an extremely vigorous campaign. Since 1926 the number of Italians naturalizing has been decreasing. The great majority of the Italians are extremely patriotic and keenly attached to their nationality. Practically all the leaders of the community refused to become French citizens, and they influenced the rank and file.

The Italian Consulate of course discourages naturalization and constitutes, together with the schools and other institutions, a barrier for the protection of the Italian spirit of the community. It happened that the intensified French pro-naturalization campaign coincided with the birth of Fascism and consequently with an intensified development of Italian national feeling. Even those who are not Fascists feel a greater pride in their *Italianità* than they ever did before. The younger generation are affected by the new spirit even

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more deeply than the old. I was told of the case of an Italian who, unable to resist the economic pressure brought to bear on him, had determined to apply for naturalization and had actually filled up the proper form; but his son, a boy of ten, expressed himself so vigorously and indignantly against the idea that he induced his father to tear up the application in the presence of the Consul-General.

Thus the Italian community, in spite of a certain number of naturalizations, has increased in the same period by 4,400, and is to-day well over 90,000, this being therefore a wholly natural increase, due to the greater fecundity of the race, as the number of immigrants is practically equal to that of the emigrants. The French increase of 16,500 in five years is mostly made up of naturalizations, and this has caused some French writers to doubt the wisdom of the policy adopted. One of them asserted in *La Tunisie française* that the naturalizations are tending to create in the Regency a proletariat dubbed 'French', but utterly lacking in French sentiment and adding no real strength to the French element. If the French syndical law were extended to Tunisia, the syndicates would, according to this writer, end by being dominated by these bogus Frenchmen. Another French writer, M. Deymes, in the *Action coloniale*, has denounced the attempt to foist French citizenship on the Italians as a danger to the French race, an attempt to secure quantity at the expense of quality. Even the policy of importing Poles, Yugoslavs, Czechs and other non-Italians as more likely to naturalize and thus help to swamp the Italian element, while not particularly successful even from a numerical standpoint, is open to similar objections.

The compactness and patriotic spirit of the Italians in Tunisia are indeed remarkable. I happened to be

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in Tunis on the King of Italy's birthday, November 11, when the Consul-General had decided to celebrate the occasion by a school treat at a spot some six kilometres from the city. The pupils of the Italian schools turned out *en masse*, and the spectacle of 5,000 pupils of the secondary and elementary schools parading in military formation and giving the Roman salute as they passed before the representative of their King, is one which I shall never forget. All except the tiniest had walked out from Tunis and had been on their feet for five hours, and yet showed no sign of fatigue.

The Tunisian situation is a most unfortunate one. Italy herself was partly to blame for not having been bold and far-sighted enough to seize her opportunity when she had it, but her internal weakness, the serious problems which she had to face at the time, and the failure of her statesmen to grasp the importance of a vigorous foreign policy prevented her from taking decisive action at the psychological moment. A Cavour, a Crispi, a Mussolini would not have let the chance slip by, but Cavour was dead, Crispi's star had not yet arisen and Mussolini was unborn.

The lost opportunity regarding Tunisia led to the occupation of Libya. But the latter does not compensate Italy for the former, for even if Tripolitania and perhaps Cyrenaica to an even greater extent prove valuable colonies, they must first be developed, which will need much time and money, whereas Tunisia was already developed to a considerable degree at the time of the French occupation, already had a considerable Italian community settled there, and the discovery of valuable phosphate mines provided the resources for the building of roads and railways and the further exploitation of the agricultural resources of the country.

But the problem for Italy in Tunisia is not a territorial one. In spite of the occasional outbursts of



PARADE OF ITALIAN CHILDREN AT TUNIS ON THE KING OF ITALY'S BIRTHDAY

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irresponsible journalists in both countries and the insinuations of the French Press, Italy has no intention of going to war with France over Tunisia and does not indeed dream of anything of the kind. What she wants is that the *Italianità* of her sons settled in the Regency, who alone have made its development and progress possible, should be maintained, and that no unfair discrimination be used against them. If the present provisional agreement concerning their status were converted into a regular convention of five or ten years' duration, if the question of the schools were settled in a sensible manner¹ and if France were to show just a little generosity and comprehension of the Italian point of view (which she now systematically ignores and even refuses to consider), one of the chief causes of Italo-French friction would be removed. Italy has every intention, as she has repeatedly proved, of showing good-will. All that she asks is that France, too, should do likewise. Italians and French can perfectly well collaborate for the prosperity of Tunisia, as they have done in the past and indeed are still doing, to the advantage of both peoples and of the natives themselves. But that collaboration would be far closer and far more profitable if all attempts at forcible naturalization and unfair discrimination against those who refuse to abjure their Italian citizenship were abandoned, and if the Italians were allowed to provide adequately for their schools and institutions without let or hindrance.

¹ There is a good deal to be said in favour of a reasonable definition of the expression *status quo*.

CHAPTER V

ITALY'S NORTH AFRICAN POSSESSIONS

WHILE Italy was struggling against Austria and incurring the disapproval of 'Legitimist' Europe, she enjoyed the warm sympathies of Great Britain and America and of large sections of the educated classes in many other countries. But when once an independent Italian Kingdom was established, although Italy continued to have friends in many lands, the romantic interest which her struggles for freedom had aroused faded out, and she encountered a certain measure of contempt for not being able to overcome her economic difficulties rapidly; indeed, there was a tendency in some quarters to regard those economic difficulties as largely due to her own fault and to ignore the severe handicaps to which Nature had subjected her and the historical traditions which hindered her advance along the paths of progress.

But as soon as the Italian people began to make a real effort to shake off the economic shackles by which they were trammelled and to give vent to their need for economic and demographic expansion, they found themselves faced by unfriendliness in many quarters and unblushing hostility in others. The desire to acquire colonies, although based on an urgent necessity, was regarded as a piece of impudent presumption and wicked Imperialism on Italy's part, especially by the pacifist circles in countries which had practised Imperialism on the largest and most successful scale.

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Perhaps this attitude is not altogether surprising, any more than is the hostility of old-established shopkeepers towards a new competitor suddenly appearing in the field. But it is equally foolish, inasmuch as in the one case as in the other the activities of the new arrival usually tend to promote business in general and to make for the prosperity of all.

The Eritrean venture aroused some unfriendly action, especially in France, but Italy experienced hostility in an acuter form at the time of the Libyan War of 1911-12. The occupation of Libya by Italian forces in the autumn of 1911 appeared to some of the other European Governments and peoples a bolt from the blue (or at least they professed so to regard it) and as an unwarrantable disturbance of the peace which had already been jeopardized by Austria's action in 1908-1909. It was attributed by a large section of foreign public opinion to mere greed for territory, unjustified by any real necessity, as a monstrous act of aggression without any plausible excuse.

But as a matter of historical fact Italy's aspiration to the possession of the last portion of the North African coast still unoccupied by any other European Power, was, as we have seen, no new one. Apart from Mazzini's claim to North Africa for Italy, expressed as early as 1838, and the frequent suggestions made by foreign sovereigns and statesmen that Italy should annex Tripoli, the question had assumed more actual importance when the French seized Tunis in 1881. The British occupation of Egypt in 1882, in which Italy was invited to participate but had refused, narrowed down the possible field for Italian Mediterranean expansion to very restricted limits. The other Great Powers in a series of diplomatic understandings sanctioned Italy's right to occupy Tripoli, and it was only the reluctance of her own statesmen to

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embark on what was regarded by them as a 'policy of adventure' which prevented them from enforcing it.

This inaction, however, involved the risk that if Italy failed to make good her claims for too long a time, other Powers might step in and finally close the ring round her in the Mediterranean, as Austria was trying to do in the Adriatic. We must also remember that if France has great Mediterranean interests, she has a second sea coast on the Atlantic and many colonies both within and without the Mediterranean, that Great Britain is open to all the Seven Seas and has possessions and outposts all over the world. For Italy the Mediterranean is the only sea and therefore all-important.

For several years before the Italo-Turkish War various Italian geographical and commercial enterprises had begun to study the economic possibilities of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, and in the first years of the twentieth century, the recognition of Italy's claims to those territories by Great Britain and France having been secured, an expedition to Tripoli was actually planned, but was abandoned owing to internal political differences. Attempts at peaceful penetration were made, and if they had been allowed to develop Italy might have acquired economic interests in the country without interfering with the political sovereignty of the Sultan. But the Turkish authorities did everything they could to *saboteer* all such activities. In 1908, when Austria proclaimed the annexation of Bosnia-Herzegovina, Italy's opportunity, under the terms of the Triple Alliance Treaty and other agreements, seemed to have arrived. But again she held back, owing to the reluctance of Italian politicians of the old school to undertake any bold action, especially in the domain of foreign and colonial affairs, after the experiences of Eritrea. This reluctance was partly due to the uncompromising hostility of the then powerful

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Socialist party to any policy calculated to distract public interest from class warfare and to strengthen national feeling. Originally the Socialists' attitude had some justification, even though the desire to improve the economic conditions of the masses was inspired by a somewhat narrow policy of concentrating all effort on wresting from the not too large or too wealthy capitalist class an ever larger share of its profits. But eventually it degenerated into mere rabid anti-patriotism. The Italian people were taught to believe that they had no fatherland and that they were in closer communion with the workers of France, Germany or Switzerland than with their own fellow-citizens belonging to other classes. The Monarchy and the fighting services were held up to opprobrium and contempt, and the very idea of war even for national defence or for safeguarding essential national interests was rejected as a conspiracy of the capitalists who wished to get richer still on the blood of the proletariat.

While the politicians of the Giolitti school did not share these views themselves, they were afraid of the Socialists and believed in their threat of raising a revolution if any foreign adventure were attempted. The Government consequently refused at first to contemplate action in Libya, or at all events wished to delay it until the Turkish Empire broke up of itself.

Two events contributed to alter this attitude on the part of the Government and convince even the sceptical Giolitti of the necessity for action. One was the Agadir incident. The Turkish Government had been pursuing a policy of hostility to every Italian enterprise in Libya and inflicting on Italian citizens humiliations which no self-respecting nation could tolerate indefinitely. But Giolitti did not wish to rush matters, and even in the summer of 1911 it was not certain that action would be taken. At the end of July, however,

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the visit of the *Panther* to Agadir on the Moroccan coast was an unmistakable indication that Germany was about to insist on a redistribution of colonial territory in Africa in her favour, and that France, with British support, intended to make good her own claims in Morocco. Germany having been excluded from the latter country, it was not unnatural to suppose that she would turn her attention elsewhere by way of compensation, and that this 'elsewhere' might be Libya, in spite of her former declarations in support of Italy's eventual claims to that country. In view of the close intimacy between the German and Turkish Governments, it was very probable that the Porte would regard German penetration more favourably than that of Italy.

The moment, therefore, seemed ripe for that Italian move in Libya to which Great Britain and France had given their approval in view of the establishment of French domination over the whole of North Africa west of Tripolitania. Had Italy not moved then, her claims over Libya might well have been regarded as being forfeit, and if she had only decided to take action at some distant future date she might then perhaps not be able to secure their fresh recognition, even independently of Germany's intention to occupy Libya which there were good reasons to believe was maturing.

The other event was the rise of Italian Nationalism. A small group of political thinkers, men without authority or personal ambition, mostly poor and obscure, but filled with sincere patriotism and aiming only at the moral elevation of their country from the slough of despond and scepticism into which its politicians had made it sink, had rapidly come into prominence and began to influence an ever-increasing section of public opinion.¹ The importance of a

¹ A more detailed account of the rise of Italian Nationalism will be found in my book *Italy* (Ernest Benn, Ltd., 1929).

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vigorous foreign policy and the absolute necessity of an expansion which did not consist exclusively in furnishing richer countries with an unlimited supply of labour was at last being grasped. The Nationalist Association was founded at the close of the Nationalist Congress held in Florence in December, 1910, and by means of its weekly (afterwards daily) organ, *L'Idea nazionale*, one of the most vigorous, outspoken and honest papers ever printed in Italy, undertook an active campaign in favour of the development of an Italian national soul, and when the Libyan question seemed to be reaching a crisis, the Nationalists saw in it a test case of Italy's capacity to act with dignity and boldness.

The then Prime Minister, Giovanni Giolitti, would certainly have preferred to lie low and do nothing, foreign entanglements being his bugbear. But the Nationalists now appeared as a party which, although small in numbers and almost unrepresented in the Chamber of Deputies, was quite as vigorous and uncompromising as the Socialists, and far more courageous, and capable of giving a too feeble and supine Government even more trouble. Giolitti, sensing the temper of the country, felt that the Nationalists had at least as large a section of public opinion behind them as the Socialists, and that if he let slip Italy's opportunity of securing the last available territory in North Africa he would be faced by a patriotic opposition of a peculiarly virulent type, well able to upset his carefully laid Parliamentary schemes.

It was these considerations which finally engendered in the Premier the conviction that inaction would be more dangerous to his position than action, and induced him to present an ultimatum to Turkey and subsequently to send an expeditionary force to Tripolitania and Cyrenaica.

Foreign public opinion was not favourable to the

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Italian enterprise in North Africa. Italy's case and the antecedents of her action were conveniently ignored, as were the facts that France had seized Algeria, Tunisia and now Morocco, and Great Britain Egypt, with as much or as little right as Italy had to seize Libya. This hostility, apart from diplomatic *sabotage*, took the form of publishing in the Press accounts of alleged Italian 'atrocities', which were as lurid as they were fantastic. But although many of these wilful perversions were published in some of the British papers, it was a British journalist, Mr. William K. McClure, who in the columns of *The Times* showed up this disgraceful campaign of lies most thoroughly, and who afterwards, in his book *Italy in North Africa*, has given the most complete and accurate account of the Italian Libyan campaign.¹

While France had acquired colonies chiefly as fields for the investment of French capital and as new recruiting areas for her armies, Italy, as we have seen, needed colonies as fields in which her superabundant population could settle. Great hopes were entertained of Libya in this connexion, and enthusiasts exaggerated its prospects, while those who opposed the enterprise on political grounds claimed that Libya had no possibilities of any kind. Both views were erroneous. But the events of the first years after the occupation made any attempt at systematic colonization or even at scientific experiment impossible. In the first place, the Turks, assisted by a part of the native population, kept up a vigorous resistance which entailed the sending of a much larger expeditionary force than had at first been contemplated, and even the Peace of Ouchy between Italy and Turkey in October, 1912, did not bring the military operations to an end, as the Arabs continued to resist and the

¹ Constable, 1913.

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Turks to supply them with arms, munitions and officers (among whom was that sinister adventurer Enver Bey), and there were even German officers among the Arab ranks. Native hostility gradually declined and a beginning of pacification was attained, the Italians having occupied all parts of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, when the World War broke out and the Italian garrisons were greatly reduced. A new Arab revolt now broke out in the autumn of 1914, promoted by both Turks and Germans, and in Cyrenaica by the Senussi sect, and after Italy had intervened in the War and her forces in Libya had been still further depleted, the Italian occupation was reduced to Tripoli and a few other points along the coast. These events strengthened the pessimistic view of Libya, and public opinion in the stress of the Great War almost forgot the very existence of the two North African colonies.

After the Armistice an attempt was made to reconquer the lost territories, and considerable forces were landed in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. But the attention of Italy's successive Cabinets was monopolized by the wrangles of the Peace Conference and by civil dissensions at home. Moreover, the demagogic theories which then prevailed were opposed to vigorous action in the colonies, and attempts were made to come to terms with the rebel chiefs and to set up fantastic local parliaments. There was even talk of extending recognition to the Arab 'republic' of the Giamuria, with its headquarters at Misurata, and of appointing an Arab Emir over the whole colony. But the Arab chiefs failed to maintain their promises, Italian authority in the interior was practically nil, and the military occupation continued to be limited to Tripoli, Homs, and the coast from Zavia to Zuara, and a part of Cyrenaica.

It was not until the end of 1921 that a serious effort was made to restore Italian prestige in North Africa,

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while Signor Volpi (afterwards Count Volpi di Misurata) was Governor. The operations were conducted with vigour and efficiency, and by the end of 1924 the whole of Tripolitania, except the Fezzan in the extreme south, was reoccupied. In Cyrenaica the task was more difficult, as outside Bengasi and Derna the whole native population was nomadic and very difficult to get hold of, while they received support from across the open and undelimited Egyptian frontier and were organized by the Serussi sect with which Italy's relations had always been uncertain and usually unfriendly. There were periodical engagements in different parts of the country, not of a very serious nature, but sufficient to impede real pacification. The Milner-Scialoja agreement of 1919 fixed the frontiers between the Italian colony and Egypt, Sollum being assigned to the latter and the oasis of Djarabub to the former. But its execution was held up until other outstanding problems left over by the Peace Conference were settled, and in the meanwhile Egypt acquired a measure of independence, so that the frontier question had to be discussed anew with the Egyptian Government. After protracted negotiations an Italo-Egyptian agreement was concluded on December 6, 1925, more or less on the lines of the earlier Milner-Scialoja understanding, and the passage of contraband into Cyrenaica was now to a large extent stopped. Engagements with the rebel bands, however, continued to take place from time to time, until in June, 1929, the leaders made full submission to Italy; negotiations were subsequently undertaken for the surrender of arms. Since that date Cyrenaica, like Tripolitania, has been peaceful.

With the pacification of Tripolitania the task of agricultural development and colonization on a systematic method could be undertaken. If the exag-

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generated optimism of the early days of the occupation was abandoned, the idea of settling at least a part of Italy's emigrants was resumed. It was now possible to conduct agricultural experiments on sound and practical lines and attempt to carry out, at first on a small scale, a policy of colonization.

The first necessity was to provide for the security of the colony, for if the whole of its territory (except, as I said before, the Fezzan) had been reoccupied, and if absolute peace reigned within the occupied area, a permanent organized force must be created to provide against all contingencies. It was neither possible nor advisable to retain large metropolitan forces in Libya, on account of the expense, so that a new defence force, largely consisting of native levies, had to be created.

On the outbreak of the Libyan War the Italian forces were wholly metropolitan, but very soon a certain number of battalions of Ascari from Eritrea and later from Somaliland were imported and proved very suitable and efficient. Later still it was found advisable to raise native levies, and these have been employed in ever-increasing proportions. Metropolitan troops are far more expensive and require much more elaborate and complicated supply services and transport, while the Eritreans, although excellent troops, are becoming more difficult to raise as the population of the Red Sea colony is becoming daily more sedentary and agricultural and less addicted to fighting as a profession.¹ A few words on the present organization of Italy's forces in Libya may not be without interest.

While there is now a single Governor for the two colonies in North Africa, the defence forces are separate. That of Tripolitania is about 14,000

¹ There is no form of compulsory military service in the colony except for Italian residents.

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strong, comprising metropolitan, Eritrean and Libyan units. The Italian troops are reduced to one battalion of regulars (men performing their ordinary military service but volunteering to serve in Libya), one legion (equal to two infantry battalions) of the National Militia, whose members are all volunteers either above or below the age for ordinary military service, and various special units such as the Air Force, the Mechanical Transport Service, Signals Corps, etc. The Eritreans are four battalions of infantry, who, as I said before, will be gradually reduced. There are five battalions of Libyan infantry, some squadrons of Libyan cavalry, the garrison artillery, a battery of camel artillery and three sections of Sahara artillery, also mounted on camels, all Libyans. The camel units are all provided with their own supply services, wireless sections and hydric sections consisting of men detailed to clear the wells and draw or pump water from them. Each unit carries five days' water supply as well. The carabinieri or military police are mixed, i.e. Italian and Libyan.

The Libyans are voluntarily recruited for two years' service, which may be extended, and are paid 9 or 10 lire per day, but provide their own food; those who re-enlist, and of course the N.C.O.'s, receive higher pay. Some Libyan soldiers have been in the Italian service ever since the occupation. Their services are very simple and they are wonderful walkers. The officers are all Italian.

In addition to these regular forces, bands of irregulars are raised from time to time when required. They are commanded by native notables, and receive pay and arms only for the period of actual service, at the end of which the arms are withdrawn. In 1929 it proved possible to entrust the defence of the more distant areas to the native inhabitants, to whom

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arms are issued when there is danger of an attack by rebel bands and subsequently withdrawn. They receive no pay.

Throughout the military operations since Libyan troops were first employed, they have always proved unswervingly loyal, and many of the native chiefs have served Italy with admirable devotion and courage and have earned many military medals for valour in the field. It was only certain tribes and individual leaders who, having first allied themselves to the Italians, deserted to the rebels during the rising of 1914-17. But this was never the case with the enlisted men, nor even with the irregular but organized bands. The fact that to-day irregular bands and even unorganized levies can be entrusted with the defence of their own areas against rebels of their own blood is evidence of the fidelity of the population as a whole to Italian rule.

The forces still hostile to Italy are the last remnants of those raised by the Turks and Germans during the World War. They have been gradually withdrawing ever farther into the interior and are now reduced to a few small units in the extreme south. Now even the Fezzan has been reoccupied.¹

The forces in Cyrenaica are somewhat less numerous, but organized more or less on the same lines, and also composed of metropolitan troops, Eritreans and Libyans.

What had engendered a pessimistic outlook regarding the agricultural possibilities of Libya was the

¹ Some time ago an English paper published a comic message (from Paris) about a body of 250,000 Tripoli Arabs fleeing from Italian rule into the French territory of Lake Chad (from which the above-mentioned rebel fragments in the Fezzan are in reality some 1,400 kilometres distant). The figure quoted is about half the total population of Tripolitania.

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nature of the soil, the lack or scarcity of water, the wind, and the shifting sands. The land consists of the oases, which are beautiful groves of date palms, and the steppe. Altogether Tripolitania supported some half a million natives (Arabs and Berbers) at the time of the occupation. The soil itself is of a sandy nature, and when analysed appeared unsuited for cultivation, nor was it possible to make any practical experiments on a large scale during the troublous times, when even the Government Agricultural Station at Sidi Mesri, a few miles from Tripoli, was occupied by troops and constituted one of the outer defences of the city.

But when after the reconquest it was possible to attempt cultivation the soil proved far more fertile than had been believed. In the first place it could produce crops which needed no more moisture than is provided by the dampness of the night air and such little rainfall as could be counted on. But it has been found possible to meet the need for water in another way. While there are hardly any perennial streams, water was not lacking under the earth. A first layer some 2 to 10 metres below the surface had always been utilized by the natives by means of primitive wells. But a second and far more copious layer was discovered a few years ago, from 10 to 20 metres below the first, to the level of which it tends to rise, so that it was only necessary to bore wells through to the second layer and pump it up from the first. Pumping operations are carried on by means of animal power, crude oil motors and, where power lines exist, by electricity.

This underground water supply has made irrigation possible, and consequently the cultivation of market-garden produce, *agrumi* (oranges, lemons, and mandarins), certain cereals and many other crops, some of which mature earlier in Libya than in any part of

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Europe and can therefore be the first to reach the Northern markets.

The third obstacle, the wind, can be overcome by planting wind screens of rapidly growing plants offering a protection for the cultivated fields. The cactus, the eucalyptus, the tamarisk and the castor-oil plant have been found particularly suitable, while the eucalyptus is also very useful as timber for building purposes, railway sleepers, and cabinet-making.

The shifting sands are the traditional drawback to agriculture and life in general in many parts of North Africa; it forms in heaps or dunes which, shifted about by the action of the wind, choke up fields and plantations, and even, as in the case of Leptis Magna, whole cities. In some areas it covers up many acres of soil and renders it useless. It is its mobility which make it chiefly dangerous. But one of the pioneers of Libyan agriculture discovered a means of fixing the dunes. In a first phase certain grasses were sown on them in squares, giving them the aspect of chessboards. In a second phase the eucalyptus, the Australian acacia, the tamarisk, the robinia are planted, and these plantations eventually modify the composition of the dunes, which become good soil, capable of bearing crops or woods. The dunes now are no longer an obstacle to cultivation.

But once the possibility of cultivating the soil was established, the main problem was to get it cultivated. The oases, as we have seen, are inhabited and cultivated, albeit in primitive fashion, by sedentary natives, and these areas were left to them in full ownership, together with a belt of land round the oases for the grazing of their cattle. There barley, market-garden produce, fodder and other crops are sown, while the palms bear large bunches of dates, which form one of the chief items in the diet of the natives.

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They are excellent to eat when fresh, but unlike the dates of the Fezzan and other hot interior regions cannot be preserved. The natives also make a sort of paste out of them, of which they are very fond, but it is not pleasing to the European taste.

Outside the oases is the vast steppe, an endless plain on which only rough kinds of grass grow and which is almost uninhabited, save for a few nomads who graze their flocks on it, and uncultivated save for small patches of barley few and far between. According to Moslem law all land in theory belongs to the State, which grants portions of it to individual farmers on condition that they cultivate it; if they fail to do so, the State has the right to withdraw the concession. The Tripoli Government has been gradually resuming the uncultivated lands capable of cultivation by the legal process known as *indemanimento*, so as to create a State demesne to be afterwards allotted to Italian farmers, and thus establish an Italian agricultural community in the country. The land is not given to them in full ownership at once, but granted under the form of concession to such persons as can satisfy the agricultural authorities that they are real farmers or that they will be represented by expert bailiffs or agents, and that they dispose of the necessary capital for the improvement and reclamation of the concession. The concessionaire pays for the land in instalments at the rate of about 50 lire per hectare (2½ acres). The Government defrays the whole cost of works of public utility, such as roads, railways, reclamation and drainage, fixing the sand dunes, etc., and it also contributes a certain percentage towards the cost of buildings, well-boring and machinery, grants exemption from import duties on material needed for agricultural purposes, and confers money prizes for each hectare of land brought under cultivation and an annual sub-



CASSEL BENTO (TRIPOLITANIA) : PLOUGHING BY MACHINERY



TRIPOLITANIA : TOBACCO PLANTATION

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vention of 1,000 to 5,000 lire a year for five years for every Italian family settled on the concession. The concessionaire on his part undertakes to carry out the work of bringing the land allotted to him into cultivation according to plans drawn up by the Agricultural Department and to settle on the land a number of families proportionate to the size of the concession. Should he fail to do what he has undertaken to do within the time prescribed, the concession may be wholly or partially cancelled. Already some 13,000 hectares of land allotted to concessionaires have been withdrawn for this reason.

The concessions area is a stretch of land along the coast from the Tunisian frontier to the beginning of the Sirte beyond Misurata, about 300 kilometres in length and extending inland for a varying depth, averaging some dozens of kilometres. At first the *indemaniamento* proceeded slowly, owing to the political and military conditions of the country, and between 1914 and 1922 only 3,600 hectares were *indemaniati*, most of which was already the demesne of the Ottoman State. But since that date, and especially since 1925, the process has been more rapid, and up to the end of 1929 had covered some 180,000 hectares. Of these 100,000 have already been allotted to concessionaires, and month by month more concessions are granted. There are in all some 1,400,000 hectares of land which are regarded as suitable for cultivation, but these figures are of course only approximate, and probably, as the area under cultivation increases, it will be found possible, within certain limits, to increase it even further. The total area of Tripolitania is far greater—900,000 square kilometres—but much of it is incapable of cultivation.

Altogether there are to-day several hundreds of concessions varying in extent from 10 or 20 hectares to a

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maximum of 5,000, but the average is about 400 to 500, that being regarded as the most manageable size. The area under cultivation is increasing steadily, and many thousands of hectares of what was regarded as unproductive desert is now bearing excellent crops; the area will certainly increase rapidly in the next few years. Farmhouses and other buildings are already cropping up everywhere.

At first some of the concessionaires failed to make good owing to their inadequate knowledge of local conditions and their attempts to apply purely Italian methods to Libya. But the local needs are becoming ever better known and applied, and recently a certain number of Italian farmers from Tunisia have come into Tripolitania either as concessionaires or as settlers on concessions held by others, and have shown, on the basis of their own experience in a country where conditions are analogous, how the best results may be obtained. The Tunisians have indeed been invariably successful and consider the land of Tripolitania superior to that of Tunisia. Among others, a Sicilian who had made a fortune of 1,300,000 francs as a farmer in the Regency, sold all his property there in order to take up a concession in Tripolitania near Castel Benito, importing a certain number of other Italo-Tunisians, and he has already made a success of this venture. He has planted large vineyards with olives in the midst of them; the olive takes fifteen years before reaching maturity, but in the meanwhile the vine begins to yield after three years, and when the olives mature the vines will be dug up and transferred elsewhere. A well on the concession supplies the water necessary for irrigating other plantations. Another Italo-Tunisian has secured a concession of 3,000 hectares some 85 kilometres west of Tripoli, built a village where a dozen Italian families are lodged,

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to be increased eventually to sixty, with a church, a school, farm buildings, sheds, stables, etc., planted a nursery of 30,000 olive trees to be distributed over the estate, laid out extensive vineyards, and now that the wells which he has bored are coming into operation, orange groves and a large market-garden as well. The day labourers are natives. Another concession of 500 hectares has been allotted to two Piedmontese brothers, who are already making it pay, and on a part of their land some interesting experiments are being carried out by a wealthy Italo-Brazilian who is trying to acclimatize a number of semi-tropical plants likely to prove valuable for Libyan agriculture. On Count Cencelli's concession near Zavia experiments were being conducted in ploughing by electricity. Near Azzizia, south of Tripoli, a wealthy Tuscan agriculturist has a concession of 5,000 hectares on which he is making other interesting experiments, and hopes to raise cattle. The problem of cattle raising is indeed a serious one, as large numbers of horses, oxen and sheep were destroyed during the War and the rebellion, and the supply is inadequate and the quality poor. Attempts are being made both by the Government and by private citizens to increase the numbers and improve the breeds. Apart from their intrinsic utility, the manure would greatly enrich the soil, artificial fertilizers not being always suitable to Libyan conditions.

What is most remarkable is that none of these concessions are more than two or three years old, as before 1926 it had not been possible to attempt any systematic farming. Another striking feature of the situation is the unbounded confidence which the Italian farmers feel in the success of their ventures. Tripoli is perhaps the only place in the world where farmers do not grumble. They are all convinced that

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in ten years' time not only will their own farms be prosperous, but that innumerable others will be likewise flourishing, and that the whole face of the country will be transformed out of all recognition. There seems to be the best possible feeling between the Government departments and the farmers, and the Governor himself, Marshal Badoglio, is particularly keen on developing the agricultural life of the colony. The head of the agricultural and land department, Sig. Siniscalchi, is an exceptionally able official with many years of colonial experience, and is most helpful to all the concessionaires.

The Government Agricultural Institute at Sidi Mesri has done and is doing useful work in all fields of agricultural production, including that of improving the breeds of cattle. The spot selected was one in which the land was by no means exceptionally good—if anything, it is below the average—so that the experiments are not being carried out in peculiarly favourable conditions. Parts of the estate are now covered with thick woods of eucalyptus, and the irrigated orange groves are flourishing and beautiful. The Institute, which, as I said before, was in the fighting line during the rebellion, only began to function regularly in 1924.

Just outside Tripoli is a large nursery garden created by one of the pioneers of Tripolitan agriculture, the late Sig. Emanuele Fenzi, and now conducted by his son, Rear-Admiral Fenzi, who after a most distinguished war record, retired from the navy on his father's death to devote himself to the work of agricultural development in the colony.

At present the Italian community is only about 20,000 and the fundamental question which everyone asks is how large a part of Italy's emigrant population can settle in Tripolitania, how many Italian farmers the colony can support. The answer can of

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course only be approximative, but the figure one usually hears mentioned is 300,000. If this estimate is accurate, there would of course be a further contingent of Italian settlers in the towns or employed otherwise than in agriculture. But even if it should prove exaggerated, and not more than 200,000 Italians can settle in the colony, or 100,000, it will always be a large and compact mass of Italians residing on the southern shore of the Mediterranean and will greatly strengthen Italy's position and prestige both from the strategic and political point of view.

The above remarks on the agriculture of Tripoli refer to the coastal area. But there are vast territories farther south the possibilities of which are as yet almost unknown. Even the Gebel Garian, which is only 90 kilometres south of Tripoli and contains some tracts of very fertile soil cultivated by native tribes living in curious troglodyte dwellings, is outside the concessions zone. The mineral possibilities of the colony have not yet been adequately prospected, but there are hopes that phosphates will be found; phosphates exist in abundance in the adjoining parts of Tunisia, and also in Egypt, Algeria and Morocco, so that it would not be surprising if they were to be found also in Tripolitania—indeed, it would be surprising if they were not.

The native population, composed of Arabs and Berbers, does not tend to increase, although of late years, since the country has been pacified and agricultural development begun, there is work at good wages for all, and a number of Tripoli Arabs who had migrated to Tunisia have now returned home. Some of the Arab farmers are also beginning to imitate the example of the Italians and adopt improvements in their agricultural methods, of which they have seen the advantages. Among the Arabs there are some

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rich of considerable wealth, although even these as a rule continue to live in a very primitive fashion. Relations between Italians and natives seem to be excellent. Each community leads its own separate life, but they meet for business or official purposes on a footing of friendliness, even if there is no fusion. Practically every Arab with any pretence to education speaks Italian, many of them very well. Some individual Arabs enjoy a position of considerable prestige and dignity, beginning with Hassuna Pasha Karamanli, who was *Beledié Reis* (mayor) of Tripoli at the time of the Italian occupation and retained that position under Italian rule until under the new law the position of nominated *Podestà* was conferred on him. A short time ago he resigned on account of his age (he is now ninety-two), but still remains honorary *Podestà*.

What I have here written refers to Tripolitania alone. Cyrenaica was, until the summer of 1929, still in the sphere of military operations; and although the same regulations concerning land concessions as those of Tripolitania apply, it has not yet been possible to make any attempt at systematical agricultural development. But now that the colony is pacified, the task will be taken in hand. It is too early to express any definite opinion as to the value of the soil and its agricultural possibilities, but most experts believe that it offers even better prospects for farmers than the sister colony, and that the cultivation of cereals on a large scale will be practicable. The total area is about 550,000 square kilometres, but only the northern district is capable of development.

There is no doubt that the technical problem of agriculture in Tripolitania—and in all probability in Cyrenaica too—has been solved. There are other difficulties to overcome, such as the choice of the most profitable crops, the marketing of the produce, the

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building of roads and railways, and in general the creation of conditions such as will make it not only possible and profitable but also agreeable for large numbers of Italians to live in the colony. More money will have to be spent, and neither the Government nor the farmers must be disappointed if some of the experiments fail. The farmers, above all, must be patient and ready to face hardships and difficulties, and not try to cultivate Libya from the cafés of Tripoli (some of them did try to do so, but were very soon ordered to repatriate). Probably no other people would be as capable as the Italians, inured as they are to hardships and to hard work, even in Italy, and who have the simplest wants, of making a success of the experiment. But the general opinion is not only that they will make a success of it, but that success is already on its way.

It must nevertheless be borne in mind that even when Tripolitania and Cyrenaica are developed to their fullest capacity, they will always be poorer colonies than those of the other great European nations. Italy was only allotted the crusts of colonial territory while the other countries secured all the best areas. After the World War, when Italy expected that her unlimited sacrifice in lives and treasure would be adequately recognized and compensated, the vast German and Turkish possessions were distributed only among those Powers who already had far more territory than they could possibly populate or develop, and Italy got nothing but a trifling extension of her frontiers in Somaliland. But she is making a strenuous effort to develop such colonial resources as she has, just as she is doing with her own metropolitan territory, which is naturally far from rich. If she cannot do more, it is not her fault.

CHAPTER VI

HISTORICAL NOTE ON LIBYA

THE earliest records of Tripolitania refer to Phœnician emporia or commercial settlements on the coast, which, when Carthage dominated the Southern Mediterranean, came under the rule of that city. After the fall of Carthage in 146 B.C. Rome did not at once assume its inheritance and Libya was ruled by the Numidian kings, but Roman influence soon made itself felt and commercial relations with Rome were established. Finally the whole of the coastal area was absorbed into the Roman Province of Africa Nova, and the three cities of Oea, Sabratha and Leptis Magna¹ attained great prosperity as markets for the wealthy surrounding country and as outlets for the trade of the interior. The Romans penetrated far inland and occupied the distant oasis of Ghadames, and even in Fezzan (the ancient Phasania) traces of Roman rule survive. Septimius Severus, who was born at Leptis Magna, made of it one of the most magnificent cities of Roman Africa.

With the decline of the Empire, Tripolitania (it had been designated *Nunidia Tripolitana*, from the three above-mentioned cities under Diocletian) was overrun by the wild tribes of the interior, especially the Garamantes, possibly the ancestors of the Berbers of to-day, who had given Rome much trouble even

¹ The name Tripolis comes from the three cities. Tripoli itself is built on the site of Oea.

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in the heyday of her power.¹ The great cities suffered serious injury and were to a great extent abandoned and choked up with sand. Christianity had been introduced into Libya, but the dissensions of the various sects caused serious disorders. The innumerable ruined churches at Sabratha attest to these divisions of the faith, while the fragments of mosaics and sculpture indicate the transition from the motives of pagan Roman art to Christian art. The Vandals thus encountered no real resistance to their conquest, but the kingdom which they founded was extremely feeble, and proved unable to withstand the Byzantines, and in the sixth century A.D. Belisarius reconquered Libya for Eastern Rome. Justinian began to rebuild the cities and churches and reorganize the defences. But the erstwhile prosperity did not return, and even at Leptis the Byzantines only occupied a part of the ancient city, the rest remaining choked up with sand.

In the seventh century the Arabs from Egypt, having conquered Cyrenaica, overran Tripolitania as well. Under Arab rule it underwent many vicissitudes, and Tripoli itself earned an unenviable reputation as a nest of piracy. Ferdinand the Catholic of Spain undertook the conquest of North Africa and seized Tripoli in 1510. Subsequently, when the Knights of St. John had been forced by the Turks to evacuate Rhodes, Charles V gave them Malta and Tripoli as bases for their action against the Infidel, but while they held Malta for 250 years, they were driven from Tripoli by the Turkish captain Sinan Pasha in 1551. The Turks fortified the city and extended their power throughout Libya as far as the Fezzan, but for a time

¹ There is a mosaic in the museum at Tripoli in which figures of a brownish-yellow skin, doubtless Garamantes, are depicted as they are being thrown to the wild beasts, probably as a punishment for their acts of rebellion.

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allowed it a measure of autonomy. It was the scene of the usual rebellions, massacres and murders common to all Moslem countries, and was frequently bombarded by the fleets of the Christian Powers as reprisals for the piratical proclivities of its rulers and inhabitants.

In 1711 a Turkish cavalry officer, Ahmed Karamanli, rebelled against the representative of the Constantinople Government and made himself ruler of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. The Karamanli dynasty reigned for over a hundred years, under a vague overlordship of the Porte. Tripolitania enjoyed a period of some brilliance, although often in conflict with the European Powers and even with the United States owing to the continued acts of piracy committed by its inhabitants. After the Napoleonic Wars the question of Barbary piracy was debated at the Congress of Vienna, and the British Government was entrusted with the task of stamping out the pest. Treaties were imposed on the rulers of Algiers, Tunis and Tripoli in 1815, who undertook to abstain from piracy; but as they failed to respect their engagements a Franco-British fleet in 1819 and a Sardinian fleet in 1825 again bombarded Tripoli. Finally, in 1835, the Sultan Mahmud II deposed the Karamanlis and re-established direct Turkish rule in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica. A part of the population, however, refused to recognize the new régime, and there were frequent rebellions against Turkish authority, which indeed hardly existed south of the Gebel. As early as 1890 Hassuna Pasha Karamanli, the descendant of the former autonomous rulers of the country, declared that he was ready to support an Italian Protectorate, and, as we have seen, since the occupation, he has always remained loyal to Italy. The story of the Italian conquest has been told elsewhere.

The history of Cyrenaica is closely associated with

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that of Greece, and Greek colonies were established on its shores from the earliest times. Cyrene appears to have been founded in the seventh century B.C. by colonists from Thera, and other cities by immigrants from various parts of Greece; the five principal cities formed what was known as the Pentapolis. They were frequently at war among themselves, and at different times fell under the hegemony of one or other of them, but Cyrene was undoubtedly the greatest, most brilliant and most prosperous of them all, and became indeed one of the chief centres of Hellenic culture. The whole of Cyrenaica was very wealthy and regarded as one of the chief grain-producing areas of the ancient world.

In 322 Cyrenaica lost its independence and fell under the rule of the Ptolemys, who held it until 96 B.C., when Ptolemy Apion died and bequeathed it to the people of Rome; it thus became part of the Roman Empire, whose vicissitudes it shared. Like the rest of the Imperial dominions, it was reduced to a state of great poverty when the Empire declined; and although Justinian reoccupied it and reorganized its defensive system, he did little to revive its prosperity. In the seventh century A.D. it was devastated by the Persians and then conquered by the Arabs. After the Fatimites had established their rule over Egypt they also extended it to Cyrenaica, but the *de facto* rulers were the Arab tribes. In 1517 the Turks occupied Cyrenaica and eventually made it a dependency of the Pashalik of Tripoli. Like Tripolitania, it was under the Karamanlis from 1711 to 1835, when it fell under direct Ottoman domination once more, and in 1911 it became an Italian colony.

From the archæological point of view both Tripolitania and Cyrenaica are of great interest. Of the three Roman cities of the former colony Leptis Magna and

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Sabratha are of immense importance. Leptis is indeed one of the greatest Roman cities which have survived. When the Italians occupied Libya, only the arch of Septimius Severus, the higher parts of a few of the chief buildings and the tops of some of the columns emerged from the sand. But in the last eighteen years a vast amount of work has been carried out, and month by month one great building after another is cleared of the sand. The sand indeed has been a blessing, for if the buildings themselves have been destroyed, the sand has preserved their fragments, so that it is only a question of finding them and putting them together again. But the task is a mighty one, and in spite of all that has been done there still remains a vast amount to accomplish. Not only have many remains of immense archæological interest been discovered, but a quantity of statues and fragments of sculpture of great artistic beauty have come to light. One of its most interesting features is the port, which unlike other ports of the ancient world, has never been used since Roman times, and is therefore unchanged. The eminent archæologists Aurigemma, Romanelli, Bartocchini, and now Guidi, have worked ceaselessly to bring to light this wonderful ancient city. At Sabratha, too, there are extensive and important remains; near Sliten a villa of great magnificence has been discovered (its exquisite mosaics are in the museum at Tripoli), and in many other spots are there important Roman remains. Of Oea little has as yet come to light, except the fine arch of Marcus Aurelius, as that city lies under the modern Tripoli. The Tripoli Museum contains many beautiful specimens of Roman art, as well as of Arabic art, the former largely from Leptis. But now what is discovered at Leptis is kept in the local museum, which is becoming very important.

In Cyrenaica the chief archæological glory is Cyrene,

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the ruins of which are being brought to light by Italian archæologists, and vie with Delphi and Olympia in importance. There are also interesting remains at Apollonia and a few other spots.

The towns of Libya to-day are picturesque, like most places inhabited by Moslems, and the mosques of Tripoli, especially that of the Karamanlis with the tombs of the family and the mosque of Gurgi, and the much older one at Tagiura, adorned with Roman columns, are of considerable beauty, although they cannot of course be compared with the famous mosques of Constantinople, Salonica, Cairo, Damascus, Jerusalem, Kairuan, etc. The old Arab quarter of Tripoli, with its *suks* or covered markets, the massive and imposing castle dominating the harbour (recently very well restored) and the old walls are all attractive features, which in spite of modern improvements have been carefully preserved. In Cyrenaica there is much less to see as regards Moslem civilization, as that country was far more backward than Tripolitania. Indeed, at the time of the Italian occupation there were only two towns worthy of the name—Bengasi and Derna,—and even these, which were Tripolitan colonies, are of comparatively small interest.

Modern development has been rapid and thorough. Tripoli is becoming a handsome civilized town, with a beautiful promenade along the sea-front, the Lungomare Volpi, which compares favourably with those of many famous European cities. The port is well sheltered and easy for landing; there is one first-class hotel and several others which are quite good, handsome cafés, shops, and many well-built white modern residences in the Arab style, a few buildings which try to imitate its Alhambra with the usual unfortunate results, and a large but not very beautiful Roman Catholic cathedral. The streets are spotlessly clean,

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except in some of the poorest native slums, and there are no beggars. The surrounding oasis is of infinite beauty and charm, the stately date-palms rising high and straight out of a bed of the most intense verdure. The other towns of both colonies are advancing along the same lines, but of course on a more modest scale.

For those who are seeking new holiday resorts with unusual features, an excellent winter and spring climate, quaint customs and remains of first-class archaeological interest, amidst scenes of great natural beauty, Libya is certain to be recommended.



CHAPTER VII
THE ÆGEAN ISLANDS

WE have seen how ancient and persistent Italy's traditions in the Levant had been until the beginning of the nineteenth century. They were to be revived once more in the later years of that century, and to come into still greater prominence almost by accident at the beginning of the twentieth.

In the spring of 1912, during the Libyan War, Italy, wishing to extend her operations beyond the limits of Tripolitania and Cyrenaica, proceeded to occupy the Southern Sporades. While no resistance was offered by the small garrisons of the lesser islands, a battle was fought and won by an Italian force at Psithos in the island of Rhodes, the largest of the group. The occupation was limited to Rhodes itself, to Cos and to eleven of the twelve islands known as the Dodecanese. The twelfth, Castelrosso (or Castelorizo), was not occupied at the time, being at a considerable distance from the others; it was held by a French garrison during the World War, and subsequently handed over to Italy. Rhodes and Cos are popularly included in the Dodecanese, although strictly speaking they do not form part of it.

Under the Roman Empire all the Sporades, together with the Cyclades, had constituted the *Provincia Insularum*, until after A.D. 395 they were assigned to the Eastern Empire and formed part of the theme of Cibiria. In 1308-13 Rhodes, Cos, Calchi, Calymnos,

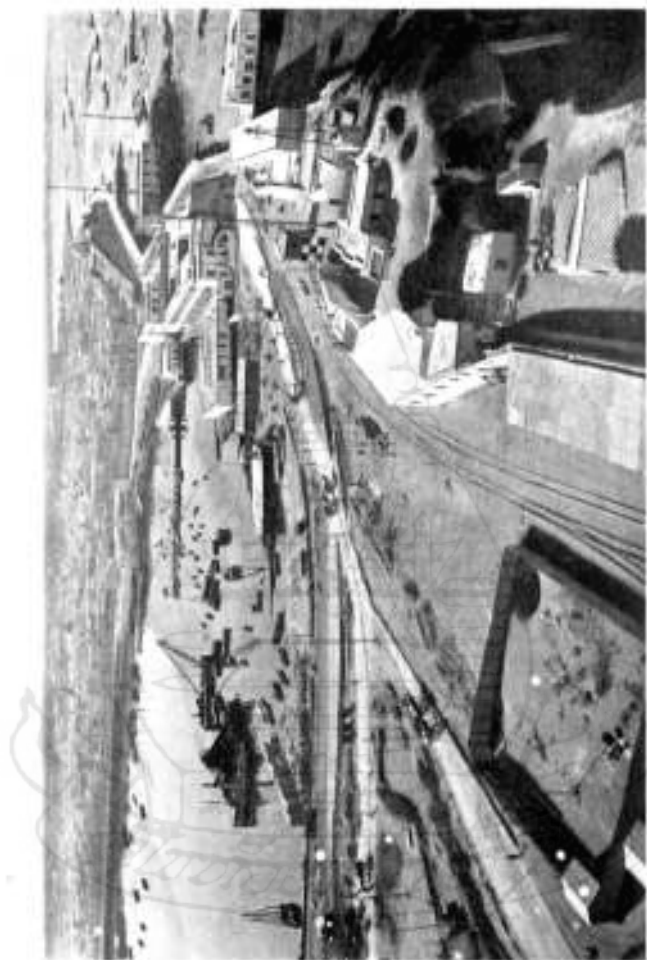
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Cestelrosso, Leros, Nisiros and Piscopi were occupied by the Knights of St. John, after they had been forced to relinquish Cyprus, whereas Caso, Patmos, Lissos, Scarpanto and Stampalia fell to the Venetian Republic, which, as we have seen, conferred some of them as fiefs to certain noble families of Venice.

The Knights held the above-mentioned islands and also certain parts of the Anatolian mainland, such as Budrum, for over 200 years, i.e. until 1522, and left a deeper impress on their character and appearance than any of the previous dominations. While there are important remains of the Greek and Roman epochs, notably the Greek acropolis of Lindos and the temple of Asclepius at Cos, the most conspicuous buildings are the castles, fortifications, churches and palaces of the Knights. Of the Turkish epoch, which lasted four centuries, nothing remains but a few unimportant mosques and a number of graveyards.

All these islands were under Turkish rule comprised in the vilayet of the Archipelago, together with the Northern Sporades, i.e. Chios, Lemnos, Mitilene, etc., but not Samos, which enjoyed a special autonomy under a Christian governor. Whereas Rhodes and Cos were governed according to the normal Turkish administrative system, on the Dodecanese proper certain privileges had been conferred by the Sultan. These privileges, which have subsequently been the subject of considerable dispute and not a few misstatements, were unilateral acts on the part of the Turkish rulers, modified at various times and always subject to the condition that the islanders proved loyal to the Suzerain Power.

The privileges consisted chiefly of a partial exemption from direct taxation and of a form of municipal autonomy. The local administration of the Twelve Islands was entrusted to elective municipal councils.



TRIPOLI - GENERAL VIEW

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The system, which, as I said before, did not extend to Rhodes and Cos, is still in force in a slightly modified form.

The islands were occupied during the Libyan War by Italy as a purely military measure, and were ruled at first by a military governor. But on the conclusion of the Peace of Ouchy with Turkey (October 12, 1912), it was provided that they should be retained by Italy as a guarantee for the fulfilment by Turkey of the peace terms, notably of the undertaking not to assist the Arab tribes still in revolt against Italy in North Africa. As, however, Turkey did not carry out this undertaking and continued to supply the rebels with officers, arms and munitions, Italy continued to occupy the islands. Nevertheless, their possession was regarded as a temporary measure and their restitution to Turkey as a probability, or at least a possibility, of the near future. This uncertainty as to their status produced various undesirable consequences. In the first place, the islanders, who had no love for Turkish rule and had welcomed the Italians as liberators, were seriously alarmed at the prospect of falling once more under Turkish thralldom and of being subjected to reprisals for their friendly reception of the invaders. At the same time this uncertainty prevented Italy from carrying out any of the much-needed improvements in the islands, lest they should merely represent money spent for the benefit of Turkey; the only work undertaken was the restoration and preservation of some of the ancient monuments, but even this was only effected on a limited scale.

Greece had annexed the Northern Sporades during the Balkan War, and immediately after had fomented an agitation in favour of the cession to her by Italy of the Southern group. Although the latter islands had never belonged to her, the agitation assumed an

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Irredentist character, and a large section of the foreign public, little informed on Near Eastern affairs, was led to believe that Italy had wrested them from their legitimate Greek rulers.

On the outbreak of the World War Italy was still in occupation of the islands, and by the terms of the Pact of London of April 26, 1915, Great Britain, France and Russia recognized Italian sovereignty over them, Turkey being already at war against the Entente. But no proclamation of annexation was made, and the government of the islands continued to be a military one. France, as I said before, occupied Castelrosso as an observation post for eventual operations on the Anatolian coast.

The Greek agitation was forgotten in the stress of the War, and did not come into prominence again until after the Armistice, when, as we shall see, Greece had been entrusted by the Peace Conference with the occupation of a large area of Anatolia; as Italy had occupied the southern part of that country, disputes arose between the two Powers as to their respective spheres of military occupation and eventually of political and economic influence. Greece then stressed her claims to the islands under Italian occupation on the grounds of nationality, although as a matter of fact the two largest, Rhodes and Cos, contain a considerable number of Turkish and Jewish inhabitants who are uncompromisingly opposed to the prospect of coming under Greek rule. By the terms of the Treaty of Peace with Turkey concluded at Sèvres in 1920 the latter Power had definitely renounced all her claims to the islands in favour of Italy. Subsequently by the Tittoni-Venizelos Agreement Italy undertook to hand over Cos and the privileged islands to Greece, retaining Rhodes for fifteen years more,

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at the expiry of which, if Great Britain gave Cyprus to Greece (which Greece also claimed), Italy would do likewise with Rhodes, provided that the people declared their wish to come under Greek rule by a plebiscite. This agreement, together with other provisions concerning Albania and Anatolia, and certain other stipulations concluded at the same time, formed part of a general settlement of the whole Near Eastern question corresponding to the situation as it was in 1920.

But the course of events upset that settlement, and Greece proved unable to carry out her share of the bargain. Her troops were totally defeated by the Turks in September, 1922, and forced to evacuate Anatolia, and Italy in October following declared the agreement concerning Southern Albania and the islands to have lapsed. Then came the Lausanne Conference, and by the terms of the Treaty concluded on July 24, 1923, which came into force on August 6, 1924, the Nationalist Government of Turkey (now the only existing one) confirmed the renunciation made at Sèvres of all its rights over the islands in favour of Italy. Great Britain and France subsequently recognized Italy's sovereignty over them, including Castelrosso, and their international position was thus definitely settled. It is true that in 1924, when the Labour Government was in power in Great Britain and the question arose of the handing over of Jubaland to Italy, which had been promised but not yet effected, Mr. Ramsay MacDonald asserted that that African problem must be considered together with that of the Ægean Islands and of the Greek claims to them, as both formed part of the general peace settlement. But the British Prime Minister was ultimately persuaded that the two matters were quite independent of each other, and ended by recognizing Italy's undisputed sovereignty

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over the islands, while also agreeing to the cession of Jubaland.

This, however, did not dispose of Greece's claims, which were based not on treaty rights or former ownership, but on the racial composition of the population and their alleged desire to become part of the Hellenic State. It is a claim similar to that advanced by Greece with regard to Cyprus. But neither Italy nor Great Britain were prepared to hand over any of their possessions to Greece.

Among the inhabitants of the Dodecanese, but more particularly among the Dodecanesian communities in Greece and Egypt, Greek propaganda continued fairly active, but it assumed divers aspects according to the circles in which it operated. At Athens and Alexandria the purely Irredentist note was stressed, and a wealthy Rhodian merchant living in Alexandria, M. Jean Casulli, created an elaborate organization for promoting Greek ideas among the islanders. Even at Alexandria not by any means the whole of the Dodecanesian community supported Casulli; a considerable portion of them are opposed to him and have set up a rival organization.¹ But for foreign consumption, especially for use in Great Britain, where the revision of treaties is regarded with disfavour, another form of propaganda was devised. It took the line that the privileges granted by the Sultans to the islanders had been suppressed by the Italian Government, and that the inhabitants were being persecuted and forcibly Italianized. This view was widely diffused in the foreign Press, especially in that of Great Britain and the United States, and Casulli had even had a volume printed in English for the dissemination of his ideas.

¹ The leaders of this organization applied for the support of the Italian Government, but it was refused.

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The principal charges levelled against the Italian administration concern the municipal privileges, the schools, the position of the Orthodox Church, the action of the Italian police and the Italian economic régime. The privileges, limited to the Twelve Islands (excluding Rhodes and Cos), were, as I said before, granted by the Sultans as unilateral acts, often modified and always subject to the condition that the beneficiaries remained loyal to the Government. Italy has maintained these privileges, save for certain modifications to be mentioned subsequently. But some of the Dodecanesian intellectuals, and especially the committees abroad and their foreign protectors, demanded that the privileges should be invested with a sort of international sanction which they never possessed, and that in consequence foreign Powers should be entitled to intervene in order to control their observance. Italy very naturally refused to agree to this arbitrary interpretation not sanctioned by any treaty or law, as indeed any other Government would have done, and the demand was tacitly dropped.

With regard to municipal autonomy, the towns and villages of the Twelve Islands were administered by municipal councils (*demogerontia*) elected annually. The Italian Government has maintained the system with the modification that, in order to avoid constant party strife, the elections are held every three years instead of annually; if, however, a council renders itself guilty of maladministration, of acting *ultra vires* or of conducting a seditious propaganda, it is liable to be dissolved by the Governor and an official placed in charge of the municipality until further elections are held. This procedure (which has a parallel in West Ham, Chester-le-Street and other places) has been very sparingly resorted to, and at the time of my visit all the councils were functioning regularly. The

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towns of Rhodes and Cos, which are not in the privileged islands, are administered by a *podestà* selected by the Governor.

The Governor, appointed by the Italian Foreign Office, is the representative of the central Government, the office being held at present by Senator Mario Lago, an exceptionally capable and tactful official, who in his six years' tenure of office has done wonders for the islands, as all who have visited them in the past as well as in the present can attest. I shall describe some of his reforms and measures subsequently. The Governor is represented by a regent at Cos and by delegates in Leros, Calymnos, Simi, Scarpanto and Castellosso, usually retired officers or Civil Servants, while the smaller islands are dependent on the Government delegate in the larger, who are represented there by N.C.O.'s of *carabinieri*. The officials have been carefully chosen, and are all of them, from the Governor downwards, enthusiasts absolutely devoted to their task of ruling these lonely islands and improving the conditions of the peoples entrusted to their charge.

One aspect of the old Turkish privileges is the partial exemption from taxation. Under the Turkish régime the Twelve Islands were exempted from all Government taxation except the customs and harbour dues, post and telegraph fees and certain taxes levied for the service of the Ottoman Public Debt, in lieu of which each island paid a single tax called the *maktu*; the system has been maintained, with this difference, that the *maktu*, instead of being paid into the general treasury, as it was under the Turks, is placed at the disposal of the local authorities for local purposes. In Rhodes and Cos the ordinary system of taxation is in force. Both in the privileged islands and the others taxation is by no means heavy, the total budget

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amounting to about 18,000,000 lire per annum; to this the Italian Government adds a sum of 3,000,000 a year, and a sum of 50,000,000 lire to be spread over ten years for public works and agricultural improvements.

A question which has given rise to disagreement in the past is the position of the Greek Orthodox Church. All the inhabitants of the Twelve Islands and the majority of those of Rhodes and Cos are Orthodox Christians, and in Turkish times the Church was under the authority of the Œcumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, as were all the Greek Churches of the Empire. But it is a rule of the Orthodox Church that whenever a province or territory is detached politically from the Empire its inhabitants of the Orthodox faith constitute an autocephalous Church independent of the Patriarchate save for the respect due to it as the most venerable and important Orthodox Church. As long as the ultimate fate of the islands was uncertain, the condition of the Dodecanesian Church remained unaltered, and therefore it continued to be dependent on the Patriarchate. In all Eastern countries the Church is essentially a political institution, and in the islands it was made use of by local politicians and their friends in Athens and Alexandria for purposes not even remotely connected with religion, particularly for seditious Irredentist propaganda. As soon as the international status of the islands was definitely settled, the Italian Government took steps to secure the creation of an autocephalous Church. The islanders themselves were not opposed to the measure, except for a handful of politicians, but the committees abroad and some members of the island clergy raised difficulties on political grounds, and at first the Metropolitan of Rhodes was opposed to it and assumed such an openly seditious attitude that the

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Governor was induced to relegate him to the island of Patmos for a time. But this opposition soon died down, and the Metropolitan himself, realizing the advantages which would accrue to the Dodecanesian Church if it were to secure its independence, became a supporter of the demand for an autocephalous Church; the rest of the clergy adopted the same attitude, and sent in an application to that effect with the support of the Italian Government; but while the Patriarchate did not reject it outright, as indeed it could not legally do, it showed the cloven hoof by making certain reservations concerning the local administration and the management of the Orthodox schools. The Italian Government refused to admit any discussion on matters of a non-ecclesiastical nature, and the negotiations were suspended.

But early in 1929, after the conclusion of the Italo-Greek treaty of friendship, the Patriarchate withdrew its reservations, and the negotiations were resumed and should result in a satisfactory settlement at an early date. Indeed, the continuance of the dependence of the islands' Church on the Constantinople Patriarchate could only be legally justified on the grounds that the Dodecanese was to be eventually handed back to Turkey—had it been a question of giving them to Greece the Church should be made dependent on that of the Greek State. At present the islands' clergy are on excellent terms with the Italian authorities, who have conferred full authority and dignity on them and treat them with great deference.

The educational question is the most complicated. Under Turkey all the schools were conducted by the various religious communities—Orthodox, Moslem, Jewish, Catholic. The Orthodox schools, which were and are the most numerous, were governed by school

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boards elected by the local Orthodox communities, while the few Catholic schools were conducted by religious orders, mostly French. The organization was far from satisfactory, the educational methods in force being extremely backward and quite unsuited to modern conditions. The Italian Government undertook to overhaul and improve the whole system, and on January 4, 1926, an Educational Ordinance was enacted dealing with the matter. The private religious schools were not interfered with, full freedom being maintained as regards the curriculum, the language of tuition, the division of classes and forms and the selection of the teachers, which continued to be provided for by the above-mentioned boards. The schools are all confessional and the teaching of religion is compulsory and placed under the control of the respective ecclesiastical authorities of each denomination.

The only limitations are those concerning the health conditions of the school buildings, the morals of the teachers, the obligation imposed on the latter to abstain from political propaganda, and the exclusion of all interference in the management and discipline of the schools on the part of non-educational authorities. A Superintendent of Education was appointed to assure the observance of the above-mentioned regulations, to which was added that of the compulsory teaching of Italian for four hours per week in all schools, while in the Italian schools the teaching of Greek and Turkish is likewise compulsory. The Superintendent controls the teaching only in the Italian Government schools, and does not interfere in any way in that of the private schools (except for the matters referred to above). Pupils who wish to have their school diplomas recognized officially must pass a State examination held by a Government educational board, but the candidates

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may elect to be examined in Italian, Greek or Turkish. If the candidate selects the Italian language, his diploma is also valid in any part of Italy, whereas if he chooses Greek or Turkish, it is only valid within the islands. The examining board comprises a teacher in the Greek, Turkish or Jewish schools if the candidate has been educated in them.

Government elementary schools were instituted in Rhodes and Cos, a higher technical school, a scientific secondary school and a teachers' training college in Rhodes. These schools are financed and conducted by the Italian missionary society and have adopted the ordinary curriculum of the similar schools in Italy. They possess admirable school buildings, and some of them are also boarding schools, a fact which has proved of great advantage to pupils from the other islands and from other parts of the Levant. They are attended by Italians, Moslems, Jews and native Greeks; the latter are the least numerous in the lower forms, but increase in the higher, because the Greek parents attach considerable importance to a Greek Orthodox education for their children in their early age, while they are coming more and more to appreciate the advantages of the Italian method in the higher forms. The Jewish and Moslem schools have adopted the Italian curriculum and Italian as the language of tuition, although the other local languages are also taught. In the Orthodox schools the curriculum is laid down by the various boards, but is more or less on the same lines as that of the schools of Greece. The method is almost entirely mnemonic and the teaching appears to be decidedly inferior to that of the Italian schools, even as regards the teaching of ancient Greek.¹ The language of tuition is Greek; the four weekly lessons

¹ I was assured that many of the Greek teachers in the gymnasium did not know the name of a single one of the plays of Euripides.

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of Italian are imparted by Greek teachers. In order to learn Italian all teachers must now attend the training college where they are taught Italian and the principles of pedagogy. As far as I could judge, the Greek teachers are able to teach elementary Italian quite efficiently, and to-day nearly all persons of any education know a certain amount of Italian.

The enactment of the Educational Ordinance at first produced some friction in Rhodes and especially in Calymnos, which is the most 'political' of all the islands and raises quite an astonishing number of lawyers, doctors and schoolmasters. The provisions which encountered most opposition were those concerning the Educational Superintendent, the exclusion of interference in the schools of non-educational authorities (i.e. of the Church), and the injunction that the teachers must abstain from political propaganda, which in the case of some teachers had been a more important occupation than that of education. At Calymnos the teachers at first refused to admit the Superintendent except as a 'friend'. But the difficulties were soon overcome without any necessity for rigorous measures or the infliction of penalties, and the educational regulations now work smoothly and satisfactorily. The Superintendent, Sig. Giuliani, is a man of considerable tact and endowed with a conciliatory spirit, and has established friendly relations with the teachers and ephoria, who accept his authority in all matters entrusted to him by the Ordinance.

Sig. Lago has still wider ideas for the development of education in the islands. In the first place he is trying to induce the Italian communities in all parts of the Levant to send their children to the schools of the Dodecanese. Some of these communities, especially those in Turkey where foreign schools are subject

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to the most hampering restrictions and chicanery, have founded scholarships for Rhodes, and it is hoped that the number of these pupils will increase considerably, so that all the Italian Levantines will end by having an Italian education instead of a French one, as is the case with many of them, especially in the places where there were no Italian schools.

Sig. Lago has also created the Istituto rabbinico for the education of rabbis destined to take charge of synagogues in the Levant; no such school exists anywhere else in this part of the world, so that the Rhodes institute should attract an ever-increasing number of candidates for the rabbinical calling; there they will all receive an education on Italian lines, which should prove of advantage for the diffusion of Italian culture among the Jewish communities of the Near East.

The exercise of the various professions in the islands is subject to the possession of a University degree or diploma; most of the Greek professional men secure their degrees at Athens, as that university grants Dodecanesian students considerable facilities, and the journey to Greece is shorter than the one to Italy.

But Sig. Lago's schemes are not limited to the improvement of existing institutions and to the increase of their pupils. He is a supporter of the idea of creating a university in Rhodes which, like the Italian schools, would be conducted by and at the expense of the Italian missionary society. Even if this plan should not prove feasible, it will be possible to make of Rhodes a centre for the spread of *Italianità* throughout the Near East, by providing facilities for the training in Rhodes of an ever-increasing number of young Levantines, Italians or others, on Italian lines. Italian culture and the Italian language would become ever more widely disseminated, as it was in the past, until Italian was to a large extent replaced by French,

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and in some degree by German, during the last hundred years.

To judge by the reports one occasionally reads in the foreign Press, Italy's only object in holding the Dodecanese is to use the islands as bases for some quite horribly and wickedly militarist plans of conquest. Italy's vast military and naval preparations in the Ægean, directed against Turkey, Greece, France, Great Britain, Egypt or Afghanistan, are now hardly annuals. One writer ingenuously took the new market-place in Rhodes for a huge barracks capable of housing an army of 30,000 men! Actually the building is about as suitable for military purposes as a cinema or a night club. We often hear of large transports of troops from Italy to Rhodes, which on closer inquiry turn out to be the annual arrival of new recruits to take the place of time-expired men. The garrison of the Dodecanese consists of a single regiment of infantry on a peace footing (800 men), with some auxiliary services, and a company of carabinieri who also exercise a number of purely civilian duties. Rhodes is certainly not suitable as a naval or military base, as the port is exposed to certain winds, and in fact during the World War none of the Allied Powers thought of using it except as an observation post for the opposite Anatolian shore.

Another bugbear of certain writers is 'the vast naval base' at Leros. Mr. Booth,¹ in fact, went so far as to say that the inhabitants of that island were better off than those of the others because the Governor was too busy creating this huge naval establishment to have time to persecute them. But perhaps the writer was so excited that he was confusing Leros with the British naval base at Malta! The harbour of Leros, while protected against certain winds, is exposed to others,

¹ In his volume, *Italy's Ægean Possessions*.

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ard cannot therefore offer adequate shelter for warships. All that has been done is to provide for the repair and supplies of light craft and create a small seaplane base. But even if Italy had created far larger establishments than she has actually done, it is difficult to see the iniquity of such proceedings. Other Powers with overseas interests all do the same things, and their activities in this field are usually only limited by financial considerations or by geographical conditions.

The Dodecanese is one of the most peaceful areas in the world to-day. Serious crime is almost unknown, and except for the occasional activities of a tiny number of unimportant politicians, there is practically no sedition. The maintenance of order is entrusted to one company of carabinieri (some 220 men), scattered all over the islands. The whole of the interior of Rhodes (apart from the town), inhabited by some 20,000 persons, is policed by thirty-five carabinieri. These men in the lesser centres of population perform the most multifarious duties; they act as justices of the peace for petty offences, as post office and telegraph clerks, and even as teachers of Italian to the local schoolmasters. They are appealed to for everything, to settle private disputes, to make peace between husband and wife, to draft petitions to the Government and even complaints against acts of some superior authority to which, rightly or wrongly, exception is taken. I have visited many carabinieri stations in remote villages, where these men were the only Italians, and everywhere I found them on the friendliest terms with the local inhabitants. Most of them speak Greek, but on some stations there are native interpreters attached wearing the carabinieri uniform but without the five-pointed star.¹ I was told that on the whole they have not proved a success; there were forty of

¹ This can be worn only by regular members of the fighting services.

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them throughout the archipelago, but fifteen were about to be discharged, and the whole corps will probably be eventually disbanded. The officers of the carabinieri are men of superior education and experience, who have rendered and are rendering valuable services to the Government and the islanders. The O.C., Captain Luca, has spent eleven years in the Near East; he was with the Italian forces in Anatolia immediately after the Armistice, has travelled for many thousands of miles all over Turkey on horseback, and speaks both Turkish and Greek fluently. At Patmos I found a maresciallo of carabinieri (N.C.O.) who was the Italian representative in the island; I noticed that he could talk a certain amount of Greek, and when I asked him how long he had been in the Ægean, he said that he had only arrived two and a half months previously, but that having studied ancient Greek at the classical schools in Italy, he was rapidly picking up modern Greek. There is no regular police in the islands, as there is not a penny of appropriation out of which to pay them, and all the stories of the 'hordes of paid spies', about whom some imaginative writers wax exceedingly eloquent, are inventions pure and simple.¹

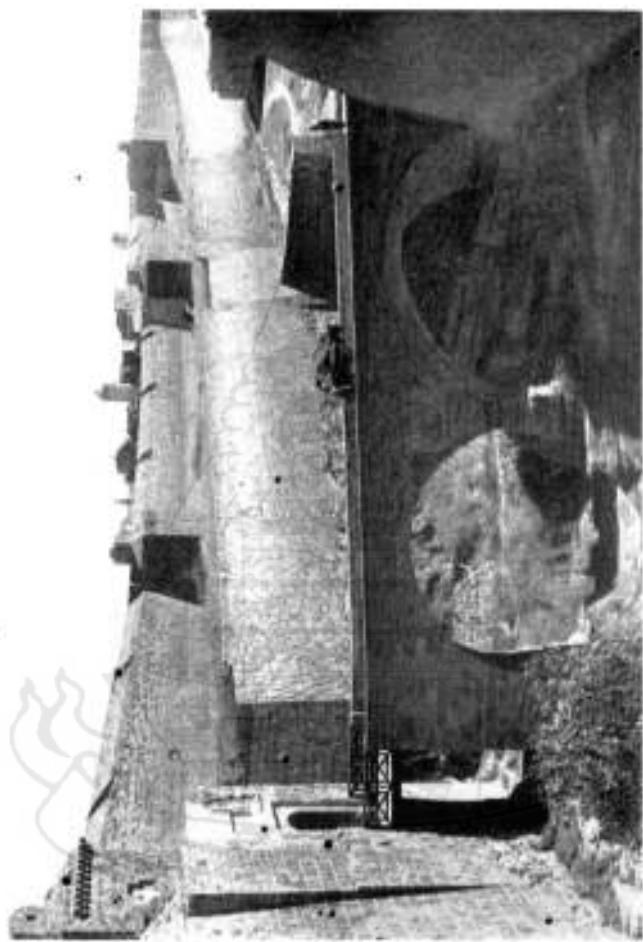
Complaints have been made by the Dodecanesian committees abroad and their friends concerning the alleged expulsions of certain islanders and of the refusal to allow certain other natives living abroad to return home. I investigated the matter and found that the so-called expulsions refer to a few notorious sedition-mongers—barely half a dozen in as many years—who were not expelled from the Archipelago, but sent from one island in the group, where they had been conducting their seditious activities, to another, and these

¹ It is, however, open to question whether all the authors of these inventions are themselves either pure or simple.

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deportations have not been maintained. With regard to the refusal of applications for admission, a certain number of Dodecanesians living abroad were not allowed to land. At the time when Italy entered into possession of the islands by the terms of the Lausanne Treaty there was a considerable number of Dodecanesians settled in foreign countries. They were given a term of years within which to opt for Italian nationality, and if they failed to do so within the prescribed time they would be regarded as Ottoman subjects. In Egypt, out of 15,000 islanders, 5,000 opted for Italian nationality within the time, and many of the rest had failed to do so only out of ignorance of the regulations; not a few applied for Italian nationality after the time limit had lapsed. Even those who have not become Italian subjects are free to visit the islands, unless they have recently and actively taken part in the anti-Italian agitation, but even these exceptions are now very few, and tend to become ever fewer.

The economic conditions of the islands presents some difficult problems. In the past the chief resources of the inhabitants were trade with the adjoining Anatolian coast, emigration to foreign lands, and agriculture. Trade with Turkey is now practically impossible owing to the innumerable restrictions imposed by the Turkish authorities and the chicanery of the officials in the Anatolian ports. Not only are there exaggeratedly high customs barriers, but many other obstacles, not provided for by any law or regulation, are imposed in practice. Thus the Anatolian merchant who wishes to export his goods to the Dodecanese is obliged to send them by Turkish vessels; there is no legal provision to this effect, but if he fails to do so he is liable to be boycotted and penalized in every way, yet if he does send his bales by a Turkish vessel they are apt to arrive seriously damaged or with



LOOKING EAST FROM THE WALLS

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half their contents pilfered. This is simply a part of the frantic xenophobia with which the Turkish nation is affected to-day. The commercial treaty between Italy and Turkey now being negotiated may improve matters to some extent, but until the Turkish mentality is changed there is little hope for real improvement. Trade with Italy is greatly encouraged and is increasing, and trade with Greece, Egypt and other countries is also satisfactory. But it is with Turkey that the trade of the islands might assume large proportions, Rhodes being the only fairly well-equipped commercial centre between Smyrna and Port Said; yet this, as we have seen, is now impossible, except as regards contraband, which shows a very promising development, but it is risky and expensive, as the Turkish authorities either demand large bribes or shoot.

Emigration was directed chiefly towards Egypt, the United States and Australia. America has now closed her doors, so that only the other two countries remain open, but neither can absorb any large number of Dodecanesians. Those who are already settled abroad still maintain close ties with the islands, and visit them, keep their houses there and send home sums of money to their relatives or for public purposes (schools, churches, etc.).

Agriculture, on the other hand, is capable of considerable development. Rhodes is in many parts very fertile; the soil is varied and capable of bearing many different crops. Wheat, oats, the vine, the olive, tobacco, all kinds of fruit trees and market-garden produce flourish or can be made to flourish. But much of the land has been long neglected and left waste, and farming is conducted on the most primitive lines. The rights of property were sometimes very uncertain, as there was no cadastral register, and

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disputes about ownership were frequent. Much of the land is not held in full ownership, but belongs theoretically to the State, which granted it as a concession on condition that it was cultivated; if it was left untilled for three years, the concession might be withdrawn. A cadastral survey has now been carried out, and the concessions of uncultivated lands have been withdrawn with a view to re-granting them to farmers capable of cultivating them. But it has sometimes happened that a farmer cultivated the fertile parts of his concession and neglected the bad, so that the State found itself in possession of many small isolated tracts of sterile land. A company has now been formed to improve the agriculture of parts of Rhodes; it has bought up a number of holdings from the peasant owners and received from the State the concession of the intervening strips in its possession, so that it now owns an area of considerable size all in one block. It has undertaken to improve and drain the whole estate and plant it with fruit trees, and cultivation will be effected both by Italian and native peasants. Although there are very few perennial streams in the island, where it does not rain for several months on end, there is water below the surface, which can be pumped up by means of artesian wells, metal air-pumps or the simpler native type of pump, at very little expense. The forests, which were being rapidly destroyed under the Turkish régime, are now carefully preserved, and indeed the Governor told me that it was in this connexion alone that he had had to resort to severe penalties, in order to stamp out the bad habits of the rural population, who were accustomed to cutting down or setting fire to the trees. There are now large forest areas (cypresses and other coniferous plants) in the mountainous districts, and in one forest there are even wild deer, also carefully preserved. The

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inhabitants are losing their destructive habits and learning at last to respect trees.

Excellent motor roads have spread over the island (300 kilometres in all), and the motor-car has rapidly acquired great popularity. Whereas country carts and carriages are rare, there are innumerable pack-horses and donkeys, but these are being superseded by the automobile and the motor-bus. The horse-vehicle stage of civilization, intervening between that of the pack animal and that of the motor, has thus been skipped. One encounters some very wonderful motor vehicles in Rhodes; the chassis is a somewhat dilapidated Fiat or Ford, while the body is a native-made wooden box of nondescript type. There are over 200 motor-cars on the island, and they are said to be always on the road or under repair. Regular lines of motor-buses serve all the remotest villages, and are greatly patronized, so that the services are run without any subsidy. On feast days taxis and private cars are hired and filled with enormous families on holiday-making bent and rush about the island.

On some of the other islands agriculture is also being developed, especially on Cos and Leros, the former being particularly suited for the production of tobacco. Simi and Calymnos subsist chiefly on the sponge fisheries, while in all there are a certain number of inhabitants employed on ordinary fishing and as sailors on small trading craft.

Another industry to which the Government is turning its attention is that of the tourist traffic. Rhodes is certainly among the beauty spots of the world. The town is a gem of mediæval architecture. Surrounded by magnificent walls, erected by the Knights and constituting one of the most perfect specimens of military architecture in existence, the streets present a wonderful picture of mediæval life. The Street of the Knights

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is flanked by a number of little palaces, each of which was the hostel of the Knights of some particular 'language'—the Italian, the English, the French, the Spanish, the Auvergnat, etc. They were meeting-places or clubs where the different groups of Knights forgathered to discuss matters of common interest—or to intrigue against each other. The palace of the Grand Master is a larger building, while the hospital of the Knights is a vast and imposing structure now converted into a museum of Rhodian antiquities. The two ports, strongly fortified in the mediæval style, are also very picturesque, and the Admiralty and other buildings are of considerable artistic and archæological interest. Outside the walled town are large Greek, Turkish and Jewish quarters, and of recent years a handsome Italian suburb has grown up, with the Government house, the market-place cafés, shops, offices, hotels, etc., and a very stately cathedral. The Governor pays the greatest attention to the architecture of all new buildings, and refuses to allow the erection of any which are not in keeping with the Rhodian style. The ancient buildings are most carefully preserved and restored, and the work of excavation goes on without respite so as to bring to light all that the island contains of historic interest.

Nor is Rhodes the only point of interest in the island. At Lindos there is a vast ancient Greek acropolis, which is only now beginning to be scientifically explored, and a great castle of the Knights was built on its ruins. Unfortunately some years ago, before the Italian occupation, a Danish gentleman undertook the work of excavation, and being more of a dealer than an archæologist, he removed many shiploads of statuary and other objects of interest, which were sold all over Europe and America. In other parts of the islands prehistoric Greek, Roman, Byzantine and mediæval



ROMA: THE ITALIAN FLEET

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remains exist, which are being gradually explored. In Cos, too, there are many objects of interest, including a fine castle of the Knights and the Greek temple of Asclepius. At Leros there is another great castle, which has been held by the Byzantines, the Knights, the Venetians and finally the Turks.

The care which the Government devotes to archaeological research finds expression in the Istituto storico-archeologico founded on November 4, 1927, to promote the study of local history and antiquities and of Italian civilization in the Levant. The Institute assigns a certain number of scholarships every year to young Italians who have graduated in literature, art, archaeology or architecture, and wish to complete their studies by research work in the Ægean. Its headquarters are in a fine old building of the period of the Knights adequately restored and provided with an excellent library. Sig. Jacopi, the capable Superintendent of Antiquities in the Dodecanese, has been placed in charge of it, and he is most helpful to all who come to study in the islands.

The scenery of the archipelago is full of variety and charm, especially the wooded heights of Rhodes, the pretty twin bays of Leros, the coasts of Cos and Calymnos; every island has its peculiar beauties, and nothing can surpass the exquisite colouring of the great masses of rock or the smiling pastoral landscapes of some of the little valleys of the interior of Rhodes.

The island of Patmos presents some ecclesiastical attractions. It was here that St. John wrote the Apocalypse, and on the summit of the island is a fortress-like convent possessing a fine library of rare liturgical and theological works, including the famous 'purple' gospel (of which the missing pages are in the Vatican).

Nor is the modern architecture without interest.

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The houses on some of the islands are painted in the brightest colours—blue, red, green and orange, or striped of many hues. In colder climes these colours might seem garish and crude, but the wonderful *Ægean* sunlight blends them all into a harmonious whole.

The climate is pleasant throughout the year. In summer of course it is hot, but the many winds prevent the heat from being intolerable. Indeed the Rhodes 'season' is the summer, when many tourists from Egypt and other parts of the Levant come for the sea-bathing. In winter the winds are apt to be troublesome, so that the islands are not suited for persons with weak lungs; but for those in normal health even the winter climate is agreeable. Of course the best seasons are the spring and the autumn.

Rhodes possesses one first-class hotel, several more modest but quite clean and comfortable hostelries, and a charming summer hotel on the Monte del Profeta, 800 metres above the sea, in the midst of the cypress woods. There is also quite a good hotel in Cos.

The islands may be reached by comfortable steamers from Venice and Brindisi. The best boats, which sail every week, take two days from Brindisi to Rhodes (including a stop of five hours at the Piræus); there is also a weekly service which touches at six of the islands, and a small local boat visits all of them. There are regular lines to and from Alexandria, and Greek steamers ply between the islands and the Piræus.

For the present the chief tourist current is that of the Egyptians and Levantines who come for the bathing, but tourists from other lands are on the increase, and all who visit Rhodes want to return. The island does not offer the giddy joys of the Riviera, although the *Albergo delle Rose* has raised a fair dance

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band and can produce cocktails for those who cannot live without such things. But it is not to be recommended to persons who find no delights save in the meretricious splendours of hyper-civilization. For those who want a restful holiday in charming surroundings and amid archæological and æsthetic beauties, Rhodes is indeed an ideal spot.



CHAPTER VIII
ITALY'S NEW FRONTIERS
I. THE ALTO ADIGE

THE unity and independence of Italy were established in 1861 when the Italian Kingdom was proclaimed and the whole of the peninsula, with the exception of Rome and Venetia, was included in the new State. Venetia, which had been handed over to Austria by Napoleon at Campoformio in 1797—one of the Emperor's most indefensible acts—and on whom the Austrian shackles were again imposed by the Treaty of Vienna in 1815, was given to Italy in 1866. But the war fought in that year had ended in a manner unfavourable to Italian arms; the land battle of Custoza, although not a disaster, had been an Italian failure, and the naval battle of Lissa a defeat. Garibaldi had, it is true, successfully invaded the Trentino, but King Victor Emmanuel had been obliged to recall him as, owing to her unfavourable diplomatic and military situation, Italy could not press her demand for that province, and indeed had to forgo her claims to many territories which had belonged to the old Venetian Republic and to others which, while not having been Venetian, were ethnically Italian.

The frontier as then delimited was established regardless of nationality, historical rights and traditions, strategic security and the desirability of avoiding future conflicts. Had nationality, as then established, been considered, Italy would have received at least the

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Trentino and the Val Gardena, the western half of the province of Gorizia-Gradisca, the city of Trieste, most of Istria, Fiume, and a part of Dalmatia. If historical rights had been regarded as predominant, all the possessions of the Venetian Republic would have been assigned to Italy. If the object had been to create a frontier calculated to discourage aggression by either of the two Powers, the line would have followed the watershed of the Adige basin and the crest of the Julian Alps, even if the question of Dalmatia from this point of view remained open to discussions.

But whatever the dominant considerations of those who established the frontier in 1866 may have been, the result was to place Austria in an absolutely predominant position over Italy. The Trentino remaining in Austrian hands constituted a wedge driven into the very heart of Italy and threatening its richest territories and vital communications. Austria proceeded to make of it a vast fortress with formidable defensive works and innumerable military roads branching out fan-like in all directions, so that the powerful armies there concentrated could menace Italy at many points. Everywhere the interior lines, the mountain crests and strategic positions were Austrian.

On the eastern border Italian territory formed, it is true, a bulge into that of Austria, but even there the mountainous belt of the Carso, which was to prove such a powerful instrument of defence in the late war, remained in Austrian hands. The Italian-speaking districts of Gorizia-Gradisca, Trieste and Istria were likewise left to Austria, as well as Dalmatia, although the two latter provinces had belonged to the Venetian Republic. The possession of Istria, the Quarnero and Dalmatia gave Austria a predominant strategic position at sea as well as on land, as she held the whole of the east coast of the Adriatic with its innumerable

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well-sheltered harbours, defended by a double and treble line of rocky islands, while Italy on the opposite shore had no port of military value between Venice and Brindisi.

Italy with its defenceless Venetian plain and its equally defenceless east coast lay at the mercy of Austria whenever she chose to attack. In addition, some 800,000 to 1,000,000 Italian inhabitants of strongly Italian sentiments were left under Austrian rule, and while Austria herself represented no national principle or idea, being merely a hotch-potch of ill-assorted races, languages and religions precariously kept together by a dynasty, an army and a bureaucracy, the Imperial and Royal Government, now that the Italian element represented only a comparatively small percentage of the total population of the Empire and did not therefore carry much political weight, set itself systematically to crush out the *Italianità* of the frontier provinces in order to placate other races and nationalities who were more influential and consequently more capable of giving trouble, and to eliminate the risk of future Italian claims based on the principle of nationality.

Although in 1880 Italy entered the Triple Alliance as a guarantee for security against a threatened French aggression, the frontier established in 1866 was destined to prove a constant source of friction, and eventually became one of the main causes of Italy's intervention in the World War on the side of the Western Powers. It is often claimed in pacifist circles that heavy armaments in peace time are a powerful incentive to war. But the placing of one country strategically at the mercy of another is apt to create an equally dangerous situation, for on the one hand it provides the better-placed State with an irresistible temptation to crush a neighbour who may some day

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become troublesome, and on the other it provides an inducement to the weaker State to make every effort to increase its strength in order to be able some day to reverse the existing unsatisfactory situation. When the World War broke out, Italy, although at first remaining neutral, at once saw in the conflict a possibility of securing a rectification of the *iniqui confini* of 1866, preferably by peaceful means, but if these failed, by force of arms. Austria having refused to give Italy any definite undertakings in this connexion—and recent diplomatic publications have proved that, even while negotiating tentatively for the cession of a small part of the disputed territories, she was fully determined to break all her promises in the event, then regarded as a certainty, of a victory of the Central Powers—Italy decided to throw in her lot with the Entente. By the terms of the Treaty of London of April, 1915, Italy was promised an extension of territory in the event of an Allied victory, comprising not only the Trentino and the Venezia Giulia, but also the Alto Adige, i.e. the watershed of the Adige basin, and Northern Dalmatia as far as Cape Pianca. The reasons for the inclusion of the Alto Adige were to a large extent based on strategic security, although there were others, as we shall see, of various kinds. With the North-Eastern and Adriatic frontiers I shall deal in the next chapter.

After the crushing defeat of the Austrians by the Italians in October–November, 1918, the Italian troops, on the basis of the Armistice terms as agreed upon by the Supreme War Council, occupied the area assigned to Italy by the Pact of London and, temporarily, certain points beyond the Brenner range for the purpose of maintaining order, owing to the anarchy caused by the panic-stricken defeated Austrian soldiers in headlong flight before the victorious Italians. It is

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not always recognized in some of the countries then allied to Italy, although it is in Germany, that the Italian victory hastened the surrender of the latter by creating for it a new and menacing southern front and the possibility of an Italian invasion of Bavaria and Württemberg.

At the Peace Conference, while President Wilson refused to recognize the validity of the Secret Treaties, including especially the Pact of London because it was in favour of the weakest of the Allied Powers who could be most easily browbeaten into accepting his preposterous theories, and while he combated Italian aspirations and rights in other fields tooth and nail, he raised few difficulties over the Trentino and the Alto Adige. The German-speaking inhabitants themselves, in view of the chaotic conditions and desperate economic plight of Austria and the predominance in that country of anti-religious and Communist tendencies, were by no means dissatisfied at being placed under the protection of a Power under which life and property and religion would be safe. The immense economic advantage which the people of the occupied districts secured cannot be exaggerated. To mention but a few items, the Austrian crown, which was rapidly depreciating to an infinitesimal part of its pre-war value, was redeemed by the Italian Government at 40 centesimi, and the Austrian pre-war Government bonds, which in Austria herself were worthless, were also redeemed by Italy, to say nothing of the security for all forms of wealth and the absence of any confiscatory legislation such as was enacted in several of the other Succession States of the defunct Monarchy.

By the terms of the Peace Treaty of St. Germain-en-Laye the whole of the Trentino and the Alto Adige were assigned to Italy, and the latter, like the other chief Allied Powers, was not bound by any clauses



LINDOS: GREEK ACROPOLE AND CASTLE OF THE KNIGHTS

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concerning the maintenance of the local languages, institutions, autonomy, religions, etc., of the minorities annexed, as was the case with the States created *ex novo* as the result of the Allied victory or greatly enlarged by it, and with the defeated States. This distinction has seemed to many an injustice, but it must be borne in mind that Italy annexed territories containing only a very small number of non-Italians—the Germans of the Alto Adige represent one-half of one per cent. of the population of Italy—whereas the lesser Allied States, notably Czechoslovakia, Poland, Yugoslavia and Rumania, have acquired many millions of alien subjects, constituting large percentages of their respective total populations. Even France, among the greater Allies, secured a far larger number of German-speaking subjects in Alsace-Lorraine than Italy did in the Alto Adige.

Various declarations by Italian statesmen and others in responsible positions are quoted as proving that Italy did not intend to interfere in any way with the language and cultural traditions of the Germans of the Alto Adige, in particular a proclamation by General Pecorigaldi and certain statements by Sig. Nitti, then Prime Minister, and Senator Tittoni, then Minister of Foreign Affairs. But these statements of policy cannot in any way be regarded as having the force of international agreements. They were neither the result of a convention between the interested parties, nor did they constitute a condition for the attribution to Italy of the territories concerned, which had been assigned to her unconditionally (except as far as concerns Italy's undertaking to enter the War on the side of the Western Powers) by the Treaty of London, and unconditionally confirmed in the Peace Treaties. The Pact of London had binding force for all the signatories, and furthermore the Alto Adige, it should be remem-

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bered, had been won by Italy as a result of the victory of her arms, which was certainly not the case with most of the territories assigned to the lesser Allied Powers. Italy therefore had no juridical obligation to apply any particular régime or form of administration to the Alto Adige. The statements above referred to merely represent the views and intentions of individual statesmen and parties at a particular moment and are not binding on their successors. Moreover, they implied the obvious condition, in the minds of their authors, that the German inhabitants should recognize the annexation as final and regard themselves definitely as Italian citizens, and that there should be no sedition-mongering to stir up trouble in the province, and especially no intriguing with Irredentist organizations beyond the frontiers.

All that can be debated is whether the policy outlined in the above-quoted statements was, from the point of view of the general interests of the Italian nation, more or less opportune than that subsequently adopted.

Let us examine the reasons why Italy desired the annexation of the Alto Adige. Had the ethnographic aspect of the problem as it stands to-day been alone considered, the frontier would have cut across the Adige valley at a point between Bolzano and Salorno, although this would have left the Ladines, who are in the Val Gardena and elsewhere, to say nothing of the numerous Italian communities in or near Bolzano and Merano, under Austrian rule. But the ethnographic problem was not the only one. The establishment of a really satisfactory frontier, which should offer neither party any temptation to aggression, was a paramount necessity, not for Italy alone, but for the peace of Europe in general. A frontier following the purely racial or linguistic line would have left the crest of the

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Brenner range and consequently all the strategical advantages to Austria. It is true that Austria was then in no position to adopt an aggressive military policy, but Italy had no serious guarantee that the *Anschluss* with Germany would not sooner or later be effected and that a resuscitated Germany might not revive the militarist traditions of the past. Italy's experience of the *iniqui confini* of 1866 was not calculated to make her desire to see the situation which existed before 1918 arise once more. The Brenner frontier was the obvious one from a natural geographical point of view.¹ It is sufficient to consult a map to realize this. Before 1918 there were over a dozen roads of invasion from Austria into Italy, and even the country between these roads offered no serious obstacles to the invader. A frontier established north of Bolzano and south of the Brenner from the point of view of invasion would have been a little but not much better. The frontier as established at St. Germain offers only three roads of invasion and all three easily defended. It is indeed considered that the present frontier has enabled Italy to reduce her army by two corps, and should therefore appeal to pacifist sentiment.

Even from the racial and linguistic point of view there are arguments in favour of the annexation to Italy of the Alto Adige. An English writer, Mr. Ian Morrow,² in upholding the German case, quotes exclusively from German or pro-German sources, and in speaking of the German historical claim to the South Tirol bases himself on the writings of Dr. Otto Stolz, who tries to prove the territory in question has been purely German for many centuries. But the English

¹ It is surprising to read in Prof. Toynbee's *Survey of International Affairs for 1927* (p. 186) that there was no 'geographical necessity' for the annexation, because 'clearly recognizable lines of nationality' exist.

² *Edinburgh Review*, Jan., 1929.

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writer should have consulted the publications of the *Archivio per l'Alto Adige*, whose contributors have 'by patient investigation into place-names, family names and baptismal names' collected a mass of evidence proving the comparatively recent Germanization of the country, and the consequent conversion of Ladine names into German ones. To quote but a single instance, Prof. Carlo Battisti has proved in the *Archivio* for 1925 (p. 296) that out of 202 communes of the Alto Adige 165 have names of pre-German origin and only 37 of German origin. The same applies to the names of farms and to a great many surnames, the Germanization of which is obviously recent. The fact is that the Germans are invaders in the Alto Adige who happened to settle on the south side of the Alps which had previously been a Latin land, and that deep traces of its former Latin character have survived. It may be claimed that whatever was the situation three, four, five or more centuries ago, the land is Germanized to-day. That may be so, but the answer is that the Italians are merely reversing the process carried out by the Germans in the past and re-Latinizing what had once undoubtedly been a Latin land. There is also evidence to show that considerable portions of the Alto Adige had been at all events bilingual in quite recent times. In a view of the town of Bolzano, printed in Vienna in the eighteenth century, the name in its Italian form precedes the German form of Botzen, and the Italian names of the principal buildings printed at the foot of the picture (with numbers corresponding to those depicted in the print itself) also precede the German ones. An Italian writer and patriot, hardly suspect in the eyes of British Liberals and Democrats, Giuseppe Mazzini, wrote as follows:

'If ever a land was Italy's it is the Trentino (as we shall see by the text by Trentino Mazzini n. cant the whole area from the then existing



ISLAND OF SEITE

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frontier to the Brenner crest). It is ours beyond Brunopoli to the girdle of the Rhaetian Alps. Ours are the internal Alps. Ours are the waters which descend to pour into the Adige and the Gulf of Venice. Italian are the natural lines of communication; Italian is the language; out of 500,000 inhabitants only 100,000 are of Teutonic race, not compact and easy to Italianize. It is the gate of Italy, a vast fortress entrenched by nature, the sole true frontier separating the waters of the Black Sea from those of the Adriatic.¹

That the Germanization of the Alto Adige was not complete even in the nineteenth century is proved by the fact that the Austrian Government was still pursuing it and also trying to extend it even to the Trentino, whose purely Italian character has never been a matter of any doubt. The Habsburgs regarded the whole area (Trentino and Alto Adige) as an advanced post of Austrian and German Imperialism. In quite recent times, i.e. a few years before the War, while the Austrian Government systematically persecuted the Italian-speaking people of the Trentino, she allowed and even encouraged various Pan-German organizations to carry on an active propaganda in that area and countenanced the formation of a Germanic cultural centre at the castle of Pergine in the Val Sugana, to which the German name of Perzen was given. An active German propaganda was also carried on by the German and Austrian Alpine Club. The history of the struggle between Austria and Napoleon, in which the German-speaking Tirolese under the leadership of the heroic Andreas Hofer played a prominent part, is quoted as evidence of the German character of the district and of its hostility to Latin, i.e. Franco-Italian, rule under the Napoleonic Viceroyalty of Italy. But in actual fact the struggle was essentially between the ultra-Clerical Tirolese and the free-thinking semi-Masonic Government of Bavaria, then Napoleon's ally, imposed on them, and against the anti-Catholic measures enforced by the Illuminist Count Montgelas.

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The hatred of the Tirolese was concentrated chiefly on the Bavarians and only incidentally on the French and their Italian allies, and the Emperor Francis, for whom Hofer had wrought such doughty deeds, proved incredibly ungrateful, for after the Sandwirth's capture, the Kaiser did not move a finger to save his life, although a word from him at that time, while the marriage between his daughter Marie Louise and the Emperor Napoleon was being negotiated, would have sufficed to secure a pardon for Hofer. To-day, as we shall see, Hofer is used as a symbol of Austrian and German nationalism in an Irredentist propaganda.

It is important to remember what the policy of Italy in the Alto Adige had been immediately after the annexation and the manner in which that policy had been received by the leaders of German public opinion in the district itself and beyond the frontiers. Writers in neutral countries to-day are apt to compare that policy with the one pursued by the present Italian Government and to deplore the change; we are told that 'the tolerant administration of Salata and Pecori-Giraldi should not be lost sight of in the indignation aroused by the harsh policy of Tolomei and Giarratana'. Apart from the fact that Pecori-Giraldi was merely the general officer commanding the army of occupation and could not therefore lay down what the policy of the Government would be after the annexation, it is important to examine the effects of the policy adopted in the first years of the Italian régime. The Italian Government began by allowing the fullest liberty to the German-speaking inhabitants in the matter of language and autonomy. In the schools, the law courts, the public offices, German was the only language, and the whole area retained its German-Austrian appearance unchanged. Every public notice was printed exclusively in German, although there

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were already a large number of Italians settled in the chief towns. The names of the streets were all in German and served to remind the people of personages of the Austrian and German Empires. There was a Franz Joseph Strasse, a Kaiserin Elisabeth Strasse, a Kaiser Wilhelm Strasse, and at Gries even an Urban Promenade, in memory of a General Urban whose only claim to distinction is that he was badly beaten by Garibaldi! The town councils were left in the hands of their German administrations, which in the case of Bolzano retained a militarized police force wearing a suspiciously Prussian-looking *Pickelhaube*, and every little village had an unnecessarily large militarized and armed fire-brigade. In fact, the whole appearance of the district was more reminiscent of the old pre-war Austria of the Habsburgs than any part of the new Austrian Republic, then in the throes of economic catastrophe and famine. In no part of the latter State was it indeed possible to see the Church and religion so respected as, thanks to Italian rule, it was in the Alto Adige, and one could certainly not enjoy in Vienna a good *Wiener Schnitzel* nor a *Sacher Torte* as, thanks to Italian rule, one could at Bolzano or Merano.

These concessions had been made by the various pre-Fascist administrations partly no doubt out of weakness and partly out of a desire to extend the methods of Liberalism to peoples who had never known them before, but always on the understanding that the people themselves would respond to this treatment by loyalty towards the Italian State.

But the leaders of German opinion in the Alto Adige took advantage of Italy's indulgent tolerance to conduct a campaign of extreme violence against the Italian Government and people, which even found expression in acts of gross discourtesy towards the King and Queen of Italy when they visited the Alto Adige.

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The whole of the annexed area—Trentino and Alto Adige—had been formed into a single province, and this undoubtedly was a mistake, as, apart from profound differences of conditions, the German element, some of whose members had been employed by Austria to do her dirty work in the persecution of the Italian Trentini, not unnaturally feared that the latter would want to get some of their own back, and in certain cases no doubt the fear was justified. The Governor of the province was Sig. Credaro, a Radical ex-Minister and a man of genuine honesty but extremely feeble, inspired by ardent pro-German sentiments and quite incapable of keeping up that outward dignity to which the new citizens of Italy had been accustomed by their former Austrian rulers. The many German newspapers printed at Bolzano and Merano every day published scurrilous attacks against all things Italian, and insinuated that the annexation was only temporary and that the Süd-Tirol would soon be restored to Austria or incorporated in the German Reich. This prevented even those who were prepared to make the best of present conditions from showing any friendliness to the Italians, lest they should be branded as traitors and suffer for it when the day of reckoning came. This campaign was to a large extent of alien origin, financed and encouraged by organizations in Innsbruck, Munich and Berlin, and the local papers were financed and staffed from beyond the frontier. Italians living in Bolzano on account of their employment or business were systematically boycotted and had great difficulty even in securing lodgings. A story is told of one Italian who, when he had finally managed to find a furnished room, was imprudent enough to expose an Italian flag from his window on some national festival. He was at once warned by his landlord that he must never do it again because such action was forbidden by

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Austrian law. Sig. Credaro himself told the present writer that an Italian school inspector, on visiting a school in Bolzano in the month of March, found to his surprise that examinations were then being held, which was contrary to the Italian school regulations; on asking for an explanation he was told that instructions to that effect had been received from the Educational Department—of Innsbrück. The very weakness of the Italian Government of the time, not only in matters concerning the Alto Adige, was in itself a cause of unpopularity and contempt, as the Altoatesini had been accustomed under the past régime to a Government which did not stand any nonsense.

The anti-Italian agitation was concentrated in the Deutscher Verband and the Andreas Hofer Bund, which, while nominally of a local character, were supported and financed by persons residing abroad. It might seem that, in view of the absolute tolerance then practised, there could be no grounds for discontent. This might have been the case had the leaders of the agitation only concerned themselves with the maintenance of the German language and culture. But their objects were of a different nature. They wanted to secure some form of absolute autonomy for the province and to keep it wholly detached from Italy and the Italian Government and people, so that when 'the day' came for re-annexation this could be carried out without the slightest difficulty, by a mere stroke of the pen. It was consequently important to incite the German element to the greatest pitch of hatred against Italy and prevent the slightest attempt at conciliation between the Altoatesini and the Italians. At a meeting of the Federation of League of Nations societies at Prague the self-appointed representatives of the Germans of the Alto Adige presented a protest because the children of Italian parents living in the province were

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obliged to attend Italian schools; the chairman of the committee said that he thought the petition contained a clerical error and that for 'Italian' parents 'German' parents should be read, but the delegates replied that there was no error. To them it seemed monstrous that Italian children in the Alto Adige should not be forcibly Germanized, even if they were only temporarily residing in the province because their parents were employed in it. The agitation in the Alto Adige was merely a part of a much vaster movement of a Pan-German Imperialist nature which aimed at making Germany the spiritual and material protector of all German-speaking peoples both within and without her frontiers, with the final object of destroying the system created by the Peace Treaties and restoring Germany to her position of military and economic predominance in Europe. This the foreign sympathizers with Germany failed to understand.

These circumstances engendered a feeling of exasperation among nearly all Italians without distinction of party, with the sole exception of a handful of men who were prepared to hand over half the provinces of Italy to foreign neighbours. When the growth of national feeling found expression in the Fascist movement, it was natural that an agitation should be set on foot for the Italianization of the Alto Adige, as it seemed intolerable that hostile organizations should be permitted to develop and act within the borders of Italy unhindered. The agitation at first assumed only the mildest forms, and if it had been met half-way by the German leaders sterner measures would have been unnecessary. Senator Tolomei, in a speech delivered on February 4, 1925, in the Italian Senate, stated that the Dante Alighieri Congress at its Trento meeting in 1922 had requested that, as one-quarter of the population of Bolzano was Italian, one of the four school

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buildings of the town should be given over for the education of Italian children. This the Pan-German mayor, Dr. Perathoner, refused. It was the same mayor who, when the King of Italy visited the town, insisted on addressing His Majesty in German, although he knew Italian perfectly.

The result was that on October 1, 1922, even before the March on Rome, the Fascists conducted a raid on Bolzano, took possession of the Kaiserin Elisabeth school, which was re-christened Scuola Regina Elena and reopened on October 3 as an Italian school, while the municipal council resigned and the Governor placed a Royal Commissioner in charge. The Fascists entered the town hall, removed the Austrian flags and for the first time placed a portrait of the King in the building; it should be noted that by Italian law a portrait of the King must be placed in every town hall, but Dr. Perathoner had always refused to comply with the law, and Sig. Credaro, in reply to the expostulations of a Fascist deputation, had said that he could not impose the King's portrait in 'other people's houses' (*in casa d'altri*), as if Bolzano were in a foreign country. Sig. Credaro himself was forced to resign, although at the end he said that the policy demanded by the Fascists was one which he himself had advocated, but that he had been unable to carry it out because he received no support from Rome. Sig. Salata, High Commissioner for the Redeemed Territories, also resigned. Less than a month after this peaceful revolution the Fascist Government came into power, and the two leaders of the Bolzano raid—Prof. Alberto De Stefani, the eminent economist, and Sig. Francesco Giunta—became members of the new Government.

The Fascist Cabinet proceeded to adopt a more thoroughly Italian policy in the Alto Adige, and grad-

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ually introduced Italian as the language of tuition into the schools and made it the only official language. This policy aroused a great deal of hostility to Italy, not so much among the people of the Alto Adige, nor even among the local leaders or their friends and supporters in Austria and Germany, who had been just as hostile to the former policy merely because it was Italian and could never forgive Italy for being there at all, as among certain foreigners who had taken up the cause of German nationalism in South Tirol. These people, wholly ignorant of the antecedents of the case, only saw in the Italianization of the province an act of brutal oppression. The Pan-Germans were not slow to take advantage of this sympathy, and their propaganda is now largely conducted in the columns of the foreign (non-German) Press, especially in Anglo-Saxon countries, where guileless editors, sentimental old ladies and die-hard Radicals are docile instruments in the hands of politicians much cleverer than themselves. At regular intervals articles appear in the newspapers and reviews describing the alleged terrorism established by Italy, and publishing instances of it which are invariably either grossly exaggerated or invented. The Alto Adige now became a separate province.

The question of the Alto Adige was raised several times at the meetings of the Federation of League of Nations societies, where, besides an Italian delegation, representatives of the German minority of the Alto Adige were also present. A number of League of Nations societies have been formed among the various racial and religious minorities of Europe, and are admitted as members of the Federation, although their object is not that of promoting the League idea and explaining the League's work to public opinion, but only that of keeping up sundry Irredentist agitations and in many cases of fomenting hatred between differ-

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ent countries and peoples. It should be added that the attitude of the Alto Adige delegates themselves, notably that of my friend Baron Paul Sternbach, who has attended these meetings most frequently,¹ has always been moderate and correct, and that while defending his point of view, with which I was of course not in agreement, he did so with honesty and fairness. The same cannot be said of certain Austrian, German, Swiss, British and Dutch delegates, especially of those of the three latter groups, who in their childish credulity appeared ready to believe and repeat the most fantastic stories printed in the yellow Press. It is indeed remarkable that the question of minorities, which is only one of the League's activities and by no means the most important, should at many meetings have almost monopolized the activities of the Federation, to the detriment of other far more weighty problems affecting the peace of the world much more closely. It is also strange that even within the field of minority problems that of the Alto Adige should have aroused far more interest and indignation among sentimental League enthusiasts than those concerning other minorities who, although nominally protected by treaty rights, are really subject to the most atrocious persecution, reaching in some cases the length of massacre, wholesale imprisonment and confiscation of property. Against the Governments responsible for such action one seldom hears any criticisms by neutrals, such as are levelled against the Italian Government for persecutions existing only in the imagination of these zealous advocates or of those whose unconscious mouthpieces these innocents often are. An

¹ After the dissolution of the Italian Parliament in 1928 an alarmist letter was printed in the *Manchester Guardian* on the deadly danger which he ran as he was no longer a deputy. But I have met him often at subsequent meetings of the Federation.

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explanation of this limitation of outlook is perhaps that the Alto Adige is easily reached by fast express trains, and that the province contains many excellent hotels in charming surroundings, so that sentimental enthusiasts can pursue their inquiries amid the amenities of civilized life and also without being annoyed by police persecution, whereas in the other areas alluded to, which are usually difficult of access, the hotels are abominable, the beds full of bugs and the local police apt to treat indiscreet foreigners to a taste of the local prisons where the accommodation is even more primitive, or at all events to escort them to the frontier.

To give an idea of the true conditions of the Alto Adige, I think it may be best to describe what I ascertained myself by personal investigation, as the best answer I can make to the attacks which have been directed against Italian policy in this region. A good example of the lengths to which these attacks go may be found in an article by R. Dunlop in the *Quarterly Review* for April, 1929.

It is important to begin one's inquiry into local conditions in the Alto Adige by a visit to Innsbrück and by perusing some of the local newspapers. While the Alto Adige question, as presented in neutral countries and international gatherings, is a problem of the protection of the rights of a racial minority, i.e. that of the maintenance of the German language and German culture among the Germans who have settled in the last centuries on the south side of the Alps, when seen from the angle of Innsbrück it appears in a very different light. To the Tirolese it is wholly and exclusively a question of Irredentism to-day, as it was under the easy-going pre-Fascist régime. To them the maintenance of the German language is merely a means to an end—the maintenance of the German

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character of the people and province of the Alto Adige or Süd-Tirol¹ until the Peace Treaties are revised and the land is given back to Tirol. Every Tirolese who dabbles in politics talks about the Alto Adige, and the four daily newspapers of Innsbrück and the other papers of the province constantly publish articles and news items about it and neglect no opportunity of keeping it before the public. The reasons for this are economic as well as sentimental. The Alto Adige was the richest part of the old Austrian province of Tirol, enjoyed the best climate and was best organized for the tourist traffic, which is the chief local industry; its loss consequently represents a serious economic loss to Tirol, which would certainly not be made good by the establishment of any number of German schools south of the Brenner. In the Hofkirche of Innsbrück there is a monument to Andreas Hofer with the following inscription by Herr Willram:

Ein Volk, den man die Heimat nahm
Gräbt knirschend seinen Zorn und Gram
Hier in den Stein der Heldengruft
Und schwört bei Hofers Staub und ruft:
'Wir werden rasen und ruhen nicht,
Bis unter Knechtschaft Fessel bricht,
Und Nord und Süd die Broderhand
Sich reichen im Deutschen Hoferland.'

Copies of this inscription are sold in the church itself on behalf of a fund for the 'oppressed' Tirolese. The illustration reproduced on another page is designed to suggest that the inhabitants of the Alto Adige have been forced by persecution to abandon their homes and emigrate across the mountains; a picture of a Tiroler with the Tirolese eagle in the background trying

¹ The expression Süd-Tirol is a misnomer, and it is only since the War that the Germans applied it to the Alto Adige alone. Before the War they applied it to the whole area south of the Brenner, including the Trentino.

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to break his chains also shows the Irredentist character of the agitation. Incidentally no one has been forced to leave the Alto Adige, except a handful of organizers of the Irredentist and anti-Italian agitation. Every year on the anniversary of the annexation of the Alto Adige a ceremony commemorating the event is held at Innsbrück, and flags at half-mast appear all over the town, even on the public offices. As typical of the Irredentist character of the agitation I may quote the speech delivered by the Rev. Dr. Kolb, a Tirolese deputy at the Vienna National Rath at a meeting in Innsbrück on September 10, 1928.

'We do not want', he said, 'a mitigation of the treatment (of the Germans of the Alto Adige), but a revision of the Peace Treaty and the restitution of the Alto Adige. We Tirolese must make ourselves a wedge between Germany and Italy to prevent any *rapprochement* between the two countries, so that no German Government which places itself against the interests of South Tirol may ever be a Government of the German people.'

It would be interesting to ascertain how these sentiments, advocating hatred between peoples and a new war, as only by that means could the Alto Adige be wrested from Italy, appeal to the devotees of the League spirit.

There are in Innsbrück several organizations for keeping up the South Tirol agitation. One of these is the *Andreas Hofer Bund*, of which Dr. Ernst Mumelter is the secretary and general factotum. He is also closely connected with the *Hilfsstelle für Süd Tirol*, which maintains the liaison with the various centres of the Alto Adige and with certain organizations in Germany supplying the sinews of war, notably with the rich and active *Verein für das Deutschtum im Auslande*. Dr. Mumelter, a native of Bolzano, had been a *Bezirkshauptmann* or Sub-Prefect in the Austrian Imperial service, and at the time of the annexation

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of the Alto Adige had opted for Italian citizenship, but at once became secretary to the Irredentist *Deutscher Verband* in Bolzano. In 1926 he came to Innsbrück and resumed Austrian citizenship. He is the author of a propaganda pamphlet entitled *Die Wahrheit über Süd Tirol*. Several of his relations still live peacefully and undisturbed in Bolzano, attending to their private business.

Another leader of the Irredentist agitation in Innsbrück is Herr Reut-Nikolussi. This gentleman is not an Altoatesino or Süd-Tiroler at all, but a renegade Trentino of the name of Nicolussi, but closely associated with the German politicians of the country. He applied to the Tirolese Government for permission to have a German prefix to his name, and that of Reut was conferred on him. He was at one time deputy for the Alto Adige, but subsequently elected to settle at Innsbrück.

Further evidence of the Irredentist character of the South Tirol agitation is supplied by an article in the Catholic *Kölnische Volkszeitung* of March, 1928; after referring to a proposal which it had made for a compromise on the question whereby Germany and Austria should guarantee the Brenner frontier to Italy on condition that the latter granted administrative autonomy to the Alto Adige, the paper stated that, having questioned a number of Tirolese leaders of public opinion, it received the reply that nothing would satisfy them except the re-annexation of the province with the Salorno line as the frontier.

If the Tirolese of Innsbrück complain of Italian oppression south of the Alps, they do not always show excessive tolerance themselves. A characteristic instance of their attitude is supplied by the case of the telegraph clerk Fräulein Auer. On the day on which the monument to the Italian victory over Austria was

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to be inaugurated at Bolzano this lady happened to appear in the office wearing a black shirt; having been somewhat roughly chaffed by her comrades for dressing up like a Fascist, she replied with some annoyance that she had donned a black shirt because she liked the Fascists. An investigation was immediately set on foot by the higher authorities, and although it was ascertained without any possibility of doubt that the 'wearing of the black' had not in her case the slightest political significance, and was only due to motives of economy, Fräulein Auer was dismissed from the service. In order to prevent Italians living in Innsbrück from wearing the Fascist badge, an obsolete Austrian law of November 15, 1867 (paragraph 34), had to be recalled into force!

The Innsbrück Irredentist associations are constantly bringing pressure to bear on the German and Austrian associations to secure financial and other assistance for their campaign, and although they do receive it in a certain measure they often complain that it is inadequate and accuse their Austrian and German friends of insufficient solidarity. In fact, there is little love lost between the Tirolese and the rest of Austria. The Vienna Government, which is overwhelmed by other difficulties, is not popular at Innsbrück, especially when it tries to establish good relations with Italy. In Bavaria the Tirolese agitators, quite forgetting the Andreas Hofer episode, find considerable support (my readers will remember the outburst of Dr. Held in the Bavarian Diet in 1926, which led to a passage of arms between Sig. Mussolini and Herr Stresemann). In the rest of Germany there are important groups of public opinion which keep up the agitation. Some are to be found in the extreme Imperialist and militarist circles who aspire to the reconquest of all the German or partially German communities lost to Germany and

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Austria as a result of the War, and these groups should not, I venture to think, make a strong appeal to the sentimental Radicals of Great Britain and the leading spirits of the League of Nations Union. Other German groups of Democratic and Socialist tendencies give more prominence to the case of the Altoatesini than to that of other German communities who really are oppressed because, as an English writer observed, 'they were more concerned to embarrass Fascism than they were to defend German culture'.¹

Let us now cross the Brenner and see how the situation presents itself on the other side. We have been told by the sensation-mongers in the columns of the yellow journals and even in those of some highly reputable reviews that 'a reign of terror' has been established, that the country is full of spies, that no one dare speak above a whisper, that thousands of persons have been thrown into prison or exiled to 'desert islands' for political offences, that no one is allowed to speak German in public, and so on *ad nauseam*. Yet on entering the Alto Adige one realizes at once that the impression conveyed by these stories is purely fantastic. The people are as gay and as light-hearted as one could wish, and if the public notices are written in Italian and Italian is the only official language, one hears German spoken freely in public and in private. In the shops of the larger towns and tourist centres the people seem to be all bilingual, and German or Italian is spoken according to the nationality of the customer. When I was in the area in 1921 even persons who knew Italian perfectly pretended not to understand a word of the language, as that was the attitude prescribed by the professional agitators. In the smaller villages there

¹ J. Barnes, in *Journal of the Royal Institute of International Affairs*, September, 1929, pp. 534-540.

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are of course people who really do not know Italian, but nowhere is any hostility or unfriendliness shown to Italians, and the population appear kindly disposed and cordial towards everyone.

There is certainly no sign of ill-feeling between Italians and Germans. There are several papers in German and one in Italian; in the bookshops German and Italian books appear in about equal proportions, at the theatres German and Italian plays are performed. The voluntary evening classes for adults are largely attended, and the Società Dante Alighieri, created for the diffusion of the *Italian* language abroad, supplies courses in *German* for Italians living in the province.

It is claimed by some foreign critics that the general aspect of the Alto Adige is identical with that of Tirol and even Germany.

'A visitor', writes Mr. Morrow,¹ 'who has come . . . over the Brenner pass to Bozen or Meran, cannot fail to be struck by the essentially Gothic character of the towns and villages in South Tirol, and the identity in architectural design and execution between them and the medieval cities and towns of Northern and Southern Germany.'

There is, no doubt, some resemblance in the architecture of the two sides of the pass, but that resemblance can also be traced much farther south into the old provinces of Italy, and is due merely to a natural factor, viz. that throughout the Alpine area, both north and south of the pass, there is a good deal of snow in winter, and this determines the shape of the high-pitched roofs. Minor resemblances may be found; Gothic features appear in the buildings of Northern Italy, just as the cathedral of Burgos is pure Gothic, but on the other hand distinctive Italian features may be found in the architecture of Prague and Vienna. Such resemblances, although interesting from an

¹ *Edinburgh Review*, January, 1929.



BOLZANO : REGINA ELENA SCHOOL FOR BOYS

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artistic or archæological point of view, cannot be taken as evidence of political situations.

One contrast between the lands on the two sides of the pass which cannot fail to strike the visitor is their different appearance of prosperity. Innsbrück, beautiful as it is, with its picturesque Mariatheresienstrasse and its Goldenes Dachl dominated by the mighty Alps, is sad and dreary, its shops are poor and its people look depressed and shabby, whereas Bolzano is full of life, its streets are busy, its shops well supplied with high-class goods, the people seem cheerful and there are everywhere signs of considerable building activity. My last visit to Bolzano was in the off season, but in summer the whole province is one vast tourist resort, every hotel is full and most private houses and peasant cottages in the villages are turned into furnished lodgings. The tourist industry was already flourishing before the War, and although immediately after the Armistice the Germans and Austrians who had previously formed the great majority of the foreign visitors, ceased to come on account of the disastrous economic conditions of their countries, the Italians flocked into the Alto Adige in ever-increasing numbers, and later the Germans and Austrians, after the stabilization of their currencies, returned once more. On my previous visit in 1921 I had been told that the change of frontiers would ruin the important wine and fruit industry, as the Austrian markets would be closed and in the Italian markets it could not compete with the similar industry of the old provinces. But this difficulty has been overcome, new markets, especially in Switzerland, compensating the producers for the partial loss of the old, while the German markets are always available. Of course economic conditions vary from year to year and are subject to many factors, but taking

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the situation as a whole the above corresponds to the average state of things.

As to the terrorism which is alleged to reign, the following passage written by a journalist who visited the province in the winter of 1926, when the irritation between Germany and Italy over the Alto Adige was at its height, is not without interest:

'Whoever should happen to seek in Bozen for signs of Fascist terrorism will not get any return for his money. There is here no apparent terror. All is quiet and peaceful, and the Italians here too observe their typically courteous and friendly manners. The troops behave particularly well; I have never heard a single complaint concerning the behaviour of officers and soldiers, and I have often noticed that officers, even where Italian was understood, take the trouble to speak German.'

This passage is not by an Italian Fascist writer or a foreign sympathizer, but by the German author Alexis von Engelhardt and printed in the *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* of February 6, 1926.

It may be answered that if there is no visible terrorism there may be 'thousands of persons languishing in dungeons or on desert islands for political offences'. Yet on inquiry I ascertained that the total number of arrests for political offences effected since the Italian occupation can be counted on the fingers of one's hand, and for several years past there have been none at all. It is difficult to reconcile these facts with the fantastic stories recounted in the Press. Much has been made in the Austrian, German and neutral Press of the cases of Herr Riedl and Noldin. Riedl had been condemned to five years' *confino* in an island (not a desert island, but one frequented as a health resort) for conducting a seditious anti-Italian propaganda; but immediately after his departure his young children sent a petition to Sig. Mussolini asking that their father should be sent home to them, as their mother was dead. The request was granted at once, so that

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Riedl's punishment only lasted one month. Noldin, who is not a German by origin but a Trentino renegade, had not only been guilty of the same offences as Riedl, but had even organized a raid by armed bands on the carabinieri barracks at Salorno, a place in the mixed Italo-German area, during the easy-going pre-Fascist régime. He was condemned to three years' *confino*, but was liberated after two years and lived unmolested in his home until his death.

There remains the question of the schools. It has been asserted that, as a result of the Italianization of the schools, the school children who know no Italian are taught by teachers knowing no German, so that the former leave school more ignorant than when they entered school.¹ The system adopted is that the schools were gradually Italianized, i.e. Italian was introduced as the language of tuition during the first year in the first or lowest class of the elementary schools; in the second year it was extended to the second class, the third year into the third, and so on. At the time of writing German is, I believe, still the language of tuition only in the eighth class. In the secondary schools the language of tuition is Italian, but German is also taught. I have visited a number of elementary schools, both in Bolzano and in small villages, and have talked to numbers of school children, including many of the first class who had then (it was in March) attended school only for five months, and I found that nearly all could speak Italian and even write it, those of the first class fairly well, those of the upper classes very well, in spite of the fact that at home they only speak German. I have seldom seen such a healthy, jolly and happy-looking lot of children as in the schools of the Alto Adige; none of them

¹ See, for instance, A. Toynbee's *Survey for 1927*, p. 193, and R. Dunlop's article in the *Quarterly Review* for April, 1929.

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appeared in the least shy of a stranger, and the teachers whom I saw all showed the greatest gentleness in handling their pupils. The patience and self-sacrifice of these teachers, especially in the remoter mountain districts, is indeed remarkable, and although arriving as strangers and looked upon at first with suspicion, they nearly always succeeded in winning the hearts of children and parents in a very short time. The trouble is that, while the cost of living in places which are nearly all summer resorts is higher than in the rest of Italy, the pay is the same, so that a number of teachers, after a year or so in the Alto Adige, try to get transferred elsewhere. The success of their teaching is indeed in direct ratio to the length of time which they remain in the same place. In a small village near Caldaro I visited a school with only a single teacher, a German lady from a neighbouring village; yet she had taught her pupils to speak, read and write Italian admirably. The system followed, as the school inspector told me, is that of the mother teaching her infant child to speak for the first time, and it is remarkable what aptitude these children show in learning Italian.

It must be admitted that a large part of the merit of the success thus obtained is due to the Gentile system of education now adopted all over Italy, whereby the children are taught to think for themselves and to describe what they have really seen instead of making up compositions based on copy-book maxims or empty rhetoric, and are encouraged to draw and paint. One of the most striking features of Italian education in this area is the little fortnightly paper *Il Balilla dell' Alto Adige*, in which the compositions and quaint drawings of the school children themselves are published. The journal is exceedingly popular, as indeed is the Balilla organization itself, with the corresponding



COTTAGE USED AS A SCHOOL AT MORTER (ALTO ADIGE)
BUILT BY THE AUSTRAINS



NEW SCHOOL AT TESIMO (ALTO ADIGE): BUILT UNDER
THE FASCIST REGIME

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feminine organization of the *Piccole Italiane*. Many thousands of German children have joined these organizations, and the numbers would be still larger if a larger number of uniforms could be supplied.

The German teachers of the Alto Adige have all been given the chance of remaining on under the Italian régime, the only condition being that they should pass an examination proving that they are capable of teaching in Italian. A certain number have been employed in other parts of Italy, while others, like the lady mentioned above, are teaching in their native province. Only those few who refused to submit to the examination or failed to pass the test have been pensioned off.

The religious question has hitherto presented certain difficulties. We are told by one writer that 'the saying of Mass in German . . . was prohibited'. To anyone familiar with the ritual of the Roman Catholic Church this statement will raise a smile, as it is notorious that Mass can only be said in one language, which is neither Italian nor German, but Latin. Other prayers, notices and sermons are said normally in German; in the larger towns where there is a considerable Italian population there is also one service on Sundays in which Italian is used, the others being in German. But the clergy as a whole are anti-Italian, it is indeed the one definitely anti-Italian section of the population. Under Austrian rule the clergy were all-powerful and ruled the population with a rod of iron; to-day this is no longer the case and the change is consequently resented. A part of the province of Bolzano is in the Italian diocese of Trento, but the bulk of it is in that of Bressanone or Brixen, which also comprised a number of parishes north of the Brenner. Now those parishes have been detached from the diocese, which is thus a purely Italian one.

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The hostility of the clergy is reflected in the educational question. By Italian law the teaching of religion in schools may be entrusted to the parish priest, but it must be imparted in Italian. The Alto Adige clergy induced the parents in most cases to apply for the exemption of their children from religious teaching in school, as by law they are entitled to do, and instituted classes for religious education in the churches in summer and in the parish houses in winter, the teaching being in the German language. That the object of this teaching is not purely religious is proved by the fact that, whereas in the other schools of Italy the catechism is taught by the priests in lessons of about an hour per week, usually on Sundays, in the Alto Adige it requires one lesson a day lasting from one to two hours. The priests employ this means to retain a hold over the rising generation, and their influence in its political aspect is not favourable to any fusion between the Italian and the German element, nor does it promote good feeling between the two.

Before the conciliation between the Italian State and the Vatican the German clergy had one strong argument for stirring up the hatred of the Alto Adigines against Italy. These people, who were and are devout and indeed bigoted Catholics, were told that the Italians were atheistic and sacrilegious and that their Government had imprisoned the Pope and deprived the Church of its rights. But since February, 1929, this argument has fallen to the ground, and the priests cannot have recourse to it without violating their duties as Catholic priests. Moreover, by the terms of the Concordat no bishop may be appointed to an Italian see without the approval of the Italian Government, nor a parish priest without that of the local authorities, so that it will be possible to secure in time a body of clergy who are loyal to the Government

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and who abstain from seditious activity. At the same time the re-introduction of the validity of Church marriages should go far to satisfy the *amour propre* of the priesthood and incidentally to increase the amount of their fees and give them back a part of their former prestige, while rendering their ties with the Italian Government closer.

A great deal of useful work both from a national and a humanitarian point of view has been performed by the *Opera nazionale di assistenza all'Italia redenta*, of which the president is H.R.H. the Duchess of Aosta. It was founded immediately after the War to provide assistance of all kinds to the people of the redeemed provinces, especially in the field of infant welfare. The officials of the Opera are carrying out their task with the most admirable devotion and have contributed very considerably, by their patience and kindness, to reconcile the German-speaking and Slav-speaking peoples of the new provinces to the Italian régime. In the Alto Adige there are over 60 infant schools attended by nearly 4,000 children. Attendance is purely voluntary, and as the children are taught Italian, when they pass into the elementary schools they already know the language. Free meals are provided for a considerable proportion of the pupils, as well as for a certain number of children attending the elementary schools in the remoter mountain villages. Schools of needlework have also been instituted in many places and medical dispensaries for children and mothers, and a great deal is done for child welfare in all forms. In addition, the Opera operates 112 rural day schools for teachers and others, and 195 evening classes for adults, with about 5,000 pupils who attend voluntarily to learn Italian. One of the managers of the Opera told me that whereas at first there were occasional difficulties

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in getting the children to attend, attendance is now limited only by the capacity of the schools.

A dozen German newspapers and periodicals are printed in the Alto Adige, including one daily. An Austrian writer stated recently that 'in the enslaved South Tirol there were more German newspapers and periodicals than in free Vienna'.¹ Nor have the local traditions and customs been in any way interfered with. On the contrary, nothing is neglected to encourage them. Popular festivals, plays, country race meetings, ancient costumes, etc., are not only kept up in the province itself, but are exhibited all over Italy. The cult of the memory of Andreas Hofer, the popular Tirolese war hero, far from being banned, is strongly encouraged in every way. There are streets named after him in Bolzano and Merano, and in the latter town there is a monument to him and the principal barracks is named Caserma Andrea Hofer.²

What, then, is the attitude of the people of the Alto Adige towards the Italian régime? The great bulk of the inhabitants are peasants, who are indifferent to political conditions, there as in other countries, provided their religion is not interfered with, the taxes not too high, and that they can sell their produce at profitable prices. As a British journalist wrote³:

"They (the peasants) seemed perfectly contented and subjected to no economic "squeeze". The one thing they really resented was the compulsory learning of Italian in the schools; but it is hard to see how the Italian Government, which is, after all, responsible for the government of the country, could refrain from so elementary an effort to teach their language to those who, after all, are Italian citizens."

In the last few years even this resentment has been greatly attenuated, and the Italian school is coming

¹ Sozius, *Das wirkliche Süd-Tirol*.

² We have seen how his name is used for anti-Italian propaganda north of the Brenner.

³ *The Times*, April 22, 1926.

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to be taken as a matter of course. The merchant and shop-keeping class attends primarily to business, and bothers itself but little about politics. There remains the 'intelligentsia', consisting of some school teachers and a few professional men. These are, as a rule, anti-Italian, as is indeed inevitable, but it is a very small class in a country which is mostly agricultural and mountainous. The aristocracy, also a small class, is not on the whole anti-Italian; it is very old-fashioned in its ideas and habits, and while it strongly supported the old Habsburg régime, it has no sympathy with the anti-Clerical, semi-Socialistic tendencies of the Austria of to-day. Possibly if at the beginning of the occupation an Italian Royal Prince had been made Governor, this class, and indeed the great majority of the people, to whom Royalty appeals strongly, would have been conciliated at once. They would no doubt have preferred an Austrian Archduke, but failing that, an Italian Prince was the next best thing. A member of this class, who served with distinction in the Austrian army during the War, is now a deputy in the Italian Parliament. He agreed to have his name included in the Government list, although he was not a Fascist, because he believed that in that way he could promote the interests of the province in the best possible way.¹ Another British journalist, writing in the *Morning Post* in May, 1928, stated that in his opinion 'out of the 200,000 German-speaking subjects now united to Italy, 96 per cent. are admittedly content to live in their present peace and prosperity under the safeguard of the Italian nation. The remaining 4 per cent. form the tiny element of malcontents'. At the last elections (March, 1929) out of a total of about 52,000 voters 41,139 went to the polls, and of these 38,243 ex-

¹ Unfortunately this man, Baron De Radiis, died under an operation in the autumn of 1929.

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pressed their approval of the régime and only 2,809 voted against it; these figures would put the percentage of the malcontents at a little more than the estimate of the *Morning Post's* correspondent, but still at a very low figure.

It is of course impossible to expect that the great bulk of the present generation can be turned into enthusiastic Italians in a few years. But the new generation can by a wise and kindly policy be converted into a body of good Italian citizens who happen to speak German. There is no intention of crushing out the German language any more than there has been of crushing out French in Val d'Aosta nor Slovene in the district of Cividale; the people of those districts are indeed among the most patriotic of Italians and accept the Italian schools, although they speak another language than Italian in their homes. It may well be that if there had not been such a rabidly anti-Italian propaganda in the first years of the occupation and if the Government of the day had not been so deplorably feeble and pusillanimous, it would not have been necessary to adopt so complete and rapid a system of Italianization in the schools. In fact, every further step in this system has been preceded by some manifestation of disloyalty on the part of certain leaders of local public opinion and still more by some attempted interference by foreigners in what *all* Italians regard as an internal Italian question. At the present moment these attempts at outside interference have been considerably attenuated in German-speaking countries (with the exception of Tirol). In July, 1928, Dr. Scipel, the Austrian Chancellor, stated that the Federal Government regarded the question of the Alto Adige as a purely cultural one, and that he has never ceased to consider it as an internal affair of Italy for which the inhabitants must apply to

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Rome. In Germany the question has been dropped in Government circles, and although occasionally some newspaper or association may take it up, it is ceasing to be a serious issue, and has not interfered with the resumption of good relations between Italy and Germany. Recently Herr Hitler, leader of the National Socialists, definitely stated that the Alto Adige was of no interest for the German people, and when certain newspapers accused him of being in the pay of Italy, he brought an action for libel against them and won it with flying colours. The fact is that Germany has so many other far more serious questions on the tapis that she cannot afford to antagonize Italy, who can assist her in many ways, for the sake of the 200,000 Germans south of the Brenner. In Germany herself the policy of linguistic Germanization is carried out vigorously among the various non-German communities within the Reich, who are far more numerous than the Germans of the Alto Adige.

The ex-Service men of the Alto Adige who fought against Italy in the World War are treated on the same footing as the Italian ex-Service men, and not so long ago a deputation of these men went to Rome to express their thanks to Sig. Mussolini for the generosity of the Italian Government towards them. The spokesman of the party delivered his speech to the Prime Minister in German.

All the Italians with whom I spoke in the Alto Adige asserted that the natives are a most law-abiding people and that they have the greatest respect for authority from whomsoever it emanates. As evidence of the confidence of the authorities in the attitude of the people, the following remark made to me by a British journalist is characteristic. He told me that he had seen in a shop-window in Bolzano the prizes offered for the winners of a shooting match—shooting

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is a very favourite pastime in the Alto Adige. The first prize was a rifle! Such a gift would hardly have been made to persons suspected of sedition, nor would shooting matches have been permitted at all in a province 'seething with discontent'.

What should help to blend the two people together still more firmly is the economic development of the province. Apart from agriculture and the tourist industry, the Alto Adige has great possibilities in the field of hydro-electric power. Under Austria these possibilities had been left almost undeveloped because the power which might have been generated would have been served not only for local needs but also for the adjoining provinces of Italy. Consequently they were purposely neglected, only a small amount of power being generated for supplying electric light and running tramways and saw-mills in the district itself. Now the latent power is being utilized to the full; the Isarco has been harnessed above Bolzano and a great power station is in the course of erection, which will generate, with its subsidiary stations, some 315,000 H.P. and supply light and power not only throughout the Alto Adige, but also over a large part of Northern Italy. The construction of this plant has brought a considerable influx of Italian workmen into the province, which should promote the blending process. Even in the field of agricultural development there are schemes for the reclamation of the marshlands along the Adige between Bolzano and Merano, which should enrich the province as a whole and also bring in a number of Italian peasants' families whose skill in work of this kind is well known all over the world. As the same *Times* correspondent wrote: 'to-day Italians and Germans, in their respective trades, are amalgamated into unnational industrial units, and this economic touch has undoubtedly done



PROPAGANDA POSTCARD ISSUED AT INNSBRUCK TO SUGGEST THAT THE ITALIANS ARE DRIVING THE
SATIATED GERMANS OF THE ALPS ADAPT INTO EXILE

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immense political good'. These remarks are even truer to-day than when they were written in April, 1926. While few Germans have joined the Fascist party, the great bulk of them have entered the Fascist syndicates—in some trades practically all; it should be remembered that admittance to them is not conditional on belonging to the party or sympathizing with its aims, but only on abstention from sedition and an anti-national activity.

It should also be remembered that some of the alleged grievances complained of are common to the whole of post-war Europe; as an acute English observer wrote to me, Altoatesini should not only be allowed to travel abroad but forced to do, to see what conditions really are in other lands.

What makes the question one of peculiar delicacy for Italy is that the Altoatesini happen to live in a frontier district, beyond which are many millions of people speaking the same language as themselves. This is also the case with the French of the Val d'Aosta, but Valdostani, as I said before, are thoroughly Italianized in sentiment. Once all traces of Irredentist propaganda disappear and there is no hankering after a past which is dead and cannot be revived, and once all outside interference has ceased, there is no reason why the two races should not live amicably side by side; in time the language question will be solved satisfactorily for all parties, without in any way contrasting with the existence of one common national sentiment. For Italy the chief difficulty lies in the choice of suitable officials for the Alto Adige. While all the higher and most of the inferior officials have proved suited to their task, there have been some exceptions among the latter who practised a policy of pin-pricks and sometimes proved lacking in dignity, but they are being found out and gradually got rid of.

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Italy has now an absolutely secure frontier on the north, one which offers no encouragement to aggression either to Italy herself or to her neighbours. This is one of the strongest assets in favour of peace. Only the uncompromising militarists and pacifists can endanger it.



CHAPTER IX

ITALY'S NEW FRONTIERS

II. THE VENEZIA GIULIA

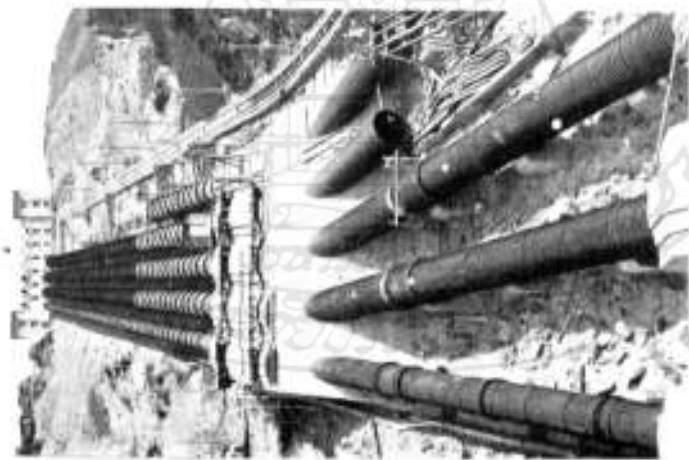
THE region described as the Venezia Giulia is comprised within the arc of the Julian Alps, the pre-war Italo-Austrian frontier and the Adriatic. The whole area before the World War formed part of the Austrian Empire, except Fiume, which was under Hungarian rule. It is traversed by a series of parallel mountain ranges, mostly of Carasic formation, rising in places to a considerable height, but seldom to the level of eternal snow. It is watered by a number of rivers, of which the most important is the Isonzo, running parallel with the old frontier and to the east of it; several of these rivers disappear and flow underground for a considerable distance and then reappear again and flow into the sea; this is notably the case with the Timavo. The Carasic area is a wilderness of rocks, most of it of hopeless sterility. Re-afforestation, begun by the Austrians and now continued under Italian rule may modify the aridity of certain districts, and there are indeed already some well-wooded mountains. There are several remarkable underground caverns, some of them, such as those of Postumia and San Canziano, of vast extent and not yet wholly explored; the Postumia grottos are among the strangest natural curiosities of Europe.

Before the dawn of the idea of Italian national unity the Emperor Napoleon attached the greatest importance to the watershed of the Julian Alps for the defence

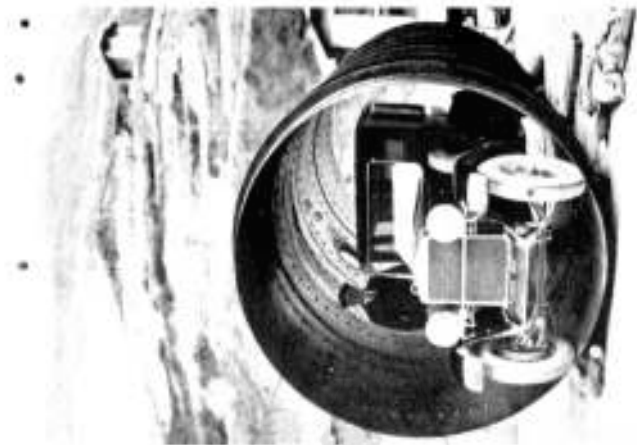
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of his Italian Kingdom, as appears from his instructions to the Viceroy Eugène Beauharnais and to Marshal Marmont, Duke of Ragusa. In the earliest days of the Risorgimento the ideal frontiers of Italy on the north-east were placed by the Italian patriots along this line. In the various schemes for the creation of a free Italy, including that of Mazzini and in the plans drawn up by the Piedmontese General Staff by order of King Charles Albert, the Venezia Giulia was regarded as destined to be comprised within the confines of the new State whose frontiers were to follow the crest of the same Julian range.

With the outbreak of the first War of Independence in 1848 the Julian frontier was demanded in the Piedmontese Parliament, and General Guglielmo Pepe, commanding the Neapolitan contingent in that war, addressed the following appeal to Charles Albert: 'Sire, cross the Isonzo and I shall salute you King of Italy!' Cesare Correnti declared Istria to be the eastern gate of Italy, and Cavour himself, in a plan for the creation of an Italian Kingdom, extended the borders to the Dalmatian coast. The war of 1848-49 ended in an Italian defeat, but on the outbreak of the second War of Independence ten years later it was hoped that Italy would secure the whole of Venetia, including the Julian area, but with the Peace of Zürich only Lombardy was freed. During the war of 1866 the hopes of the Trestine, Istrian and Gorizian patriots rose high, and Prospero Antonini wrote to Tommaso Luciani on June 28, 1866, that 'to leave Trieste to Austria and of necessity Istria too and even a part of the Friuli would be like leaving Rome to the Pope as a pretext for the interest of the Catholic Powers in the maintenance of the Temporal Power'. But at the Peace of Vienna, although the Italian army had entered the province of Gorizia as far as the river



PIPES FOR NEW HYDRO-ELECTRIC PLANT AT
CARBANO (ALTO ADIGE)



SECTION OF A PIPE FOR THE CARBANO HYDRO-
ELECTRIC PLANT, 2 METRES 80 IN. DIAMETER

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Torre, and the armistice had been signed at Cormons, Italy secured neither the whole of the Venezia Giulia nor all the dominions of the Venetian Republic east of the Adriatic, but only Venetia proper. Trieste, Gorizia-Gradisca, Istria and Dalmatia continued to remain Austrian and Fiume Hungarian.

Austria, although she had lost two rich Italian provinces by the two wars, as well as all her influence in the internal affairs in the rest of the peninsula, was, after 1866, in an exceptionally favourable strategic position as against the Italian Kingdom, both in the Trentino and the Venezia Giulia, and she at once proceeded to adopt a new policy in her remaining Adriatic provinces. The inhabitants of those provinces were predominantly Italian, and even where the majority was Slav, all the educated classes and all the cultural traditions and historic and actual civilization were Italian. The official language was Italian, and hostile as Austria had been to the Italian national idea, she had before 1866 made no attempt to denationalize the population of the Venezia Giulia any more than she had done in Venetia proper or Lombardy. But now that the Venezia Giulia was no longer an internal area, but an outer bulwark for the defence of the Empire and for offence against her neighbours, i.e. the Italians, it must be Austrianized in every sense. She had the whole of the Julian range in her possession, with a broad glacis on front of it traversed by deep rivers difficult to cross and useful for flooding the plain in case of invasion. Just as she fortified the Trentino wedge, so she fortified the Venezia Giulia and covered it with a network of strategic roads and railways with which to concentrate troops quietly and quickly, thus enhancing with the artifices of military science the existing natural advantages of geography. The new eastern frontier became no

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less of a menace to Italian security than the Adige valley.

• But not only did Austria threaten Italy from the military and naval point of view; she was also determined to stamp out every trace of *Italianità* in the Venezia Giulia, so as to make of it a political as well as a strategic base of operations against Italy. As there was no Austrian nationality or Austrian language to impose on the subject peoples, she could only employ one of the many languages and nationalities of the Empire against another, according to circumstances of time and place. The German element was still the dominant one in the Monarchy as a whole, but there could be no question of Germanizing the Italians of the Venezia Giulia as the Germans in those provinces were but a tiny fraction of the population, cut off from the mass of the Germans in the rest of the Empire by a solid block of Slavs. The Vienna Government, which in other provinces persecuted the Slavs and favoured the Germans, here assumed the rôle of the protector of the Slavs, and encouraged the Slav cultural and political movement, which was then beginning to develop in the southern provinces, and egged on the ignorant Slovenes and Croats against the more civilized Italians.

As early as 1859 Field-Marshal Radetzky and Admiral Tegethoff had urged on the Imperial Government the necessity of Slavicizing Dalmatia in order to raise up a barrier against the spread of Italian Irredentism and to ingratiate the Slavs of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, then still under Turkish rule, and prepare the annexation of those provinces to the Empire. Radetzky sent an emissary to Dalmatia in the person of the apparently harmless archæologist R. von Eitelberger to prepare the ground for Slavicization. In his report von Eitelberger declared that 'the

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Dalmatian race has a confused and bemuddled (*verdunkelt*) consciousness of nationality, whereas the population of the coasts turned with heart and soul towards the splendour of Venice, which it adored in the true sense as the Queen of the Adriatic'. On the amorphous rural population of the interior of Dalmatia, 'which then lived in perfect harmony with the Italian *signoria* and was dominated by it, a Slav conscience and a new Slav-German civilization must be conferred to replace its existing Italian civilization'. Von Eitelberger proceeds to set forth the means to attain this end, of which the first was the appointment of a Croatian general as Statthalter or Governor; the bureaucracy, the schools, the clergy must all contribute to the work.¹ It is clearly seen that the object of the policy thus outlined was not to give to the Adriatic lands a nationality common to that of the rest of the Empire, as there was no such nationality, but to juggle with nationalities and languages in order to hold the balance of power for the Imperial Government, in the true Austrian style.

Further evidence concerning the character of Austria's policy is found in Sir Thomas Graham Jackson's classical architectural work, *Dalmatia, Istria and the Quarnero*:

'The modern improvements in Spalato', he writes, 'were due to the energy and public spirit of Dr Baiamonte, the late Italian Podestà, who, however, with the whole municipality was ejected from office by the Austrians to make way for a new corporation of strictly Croatian sympathizers, which after an interregnum of two years was elected under the guns of a man-of-war stationed in the harbour, and which one may therefore assume to have been forced upon an unwilling people. Spalato has hitherto been no less strongly attached to the Latin or autonomous party than Zara itself.'²

¹ R. von Eitelberger, *Die mittelalterliche Denkmäler Dalmatiens*, Vienna, Braumüller, 1884, pp. 17-36.

² Vol. II, p. 83.

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• As the Slav element consisted almost exclusively of peasants and working men, while the landlords and other employers of labour, as well as the professional and intellectual classes, and only a comparatively small section of the workers were Italian, the reactionary Vienna Government could by its Slavophil policy pose as the 'protector' of the worker against the capitalist. In Trieste in particular, where there was a fairly important Socialist party, comprising both Italian and Slav members, the Imperial and Royal authorities lent it open encouragement. Moreover, large masses of Slovenes from the backwoods were assisted to move west in order to flood the Italian-speaking districts and alter their ethnic character; the railwaymen, the police and other employees of the Government and of semi-governmental organizations were soon nearly all Slavs, and the elections were so manipulated as to reduce the Italian and swell the Slav element until the latter displaced the former in many constituencies and municipalities. Dalmatia, which had had a strong Italian majority in the Diet and in all the larger communes and was represented by Italians in the Vienna Reichsrath, was gradually Slavicized, until by 1914 all the Parliamentary representatives and all the members of the Diet were Slavs and there were Slav administrations in all the communes except Zara.

In the Venezia Giulia a similar policy reduced the Italian majority, although it could not wholly eliminate it, and a life-and-death struggle was waged between the Slavs, supported by all the power of the Imperial and Royal Government and the Socialists and Communists who were bribed to do the dirty work of the Austrian police, and the dwindling Italian element for the domination of the Trieste municipality. The patriotic resistance of the Triestine Italians was

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magnificent, and in spite of all the forces coalesced against them they succeeded in holding the municipality as a citadel of *Italianità* in the face of the advancing and menacing tide of Austro-Slavism until the outbreak of the World War.

One of the methods whereby the Austrian Government attempted to alter the ethnic character of the Venezia Giulia was the skilful manipulation of statistics. The increase of the Slav element was so large in the official returns as to appear obviously artificial and indeed deliberately faked. Thus while the total population of Trieste had increased from 133,019 in 1880 to 220,540 in 1910, the Slavs were asserted to have increased from 15,755 (11.3 per cent.) to 35,353 (12.8 per cent.). In certain towns of Istria where the total increase of population was very small, the Slav element was made to appear to have grown from 51 per cent. to 94 per cent. at Pinguente and from 24 per cent. to 67 per cent. at Montona. In many cases all persons able to speak Slovene or Croat were classified as belonging to those nationalities. Every organization was brought into action to Slavicize the area, particularly the clergy, whose members were carefully selected among those willing to conduct a vigorous and unscrupulous Austrian and Slav propaganda. It is indeed a wonder that the *Italianità* of the people survived to the extent to which it did. It was estimated in 1910 that throughout the Venezia Giulia the Slav element was from 40 to 45 per cent. of the total population.¹

During the period of Italian neutrality at the beginning of the World War one of the chief arguments of the Italian interventionists was the necessity of completing Italian unity by bringing all the Italian-speaking subjects of the Empire and those who had

¹ See Senator Bombig's article in *Gerarchia*, September, 1927.

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been educated by the Italian tradition within the Italian State, while another was the equally urgent necessity of acquiring security against aggression by means of a satisfactory frontier. How these questions were settled on the Trentino-Alto Adige side has been told elsewhere. On the eastern frontier the question was more difficult.

Throughout the World War the great majority of the people of Trieste and of the other Italian-speaking districts of Austria were ardently pro-Italian, and consequently subjected to every form of persecution. Many were interned in concentration camps. Numbers of them escaped into Italy on the eve of Italian intervention and enlisted in the Italian army and navy, well knowing that if captured they were liable to be hanged as traitors to an Emperor they had always detested and to a fatherland which was not their own. Many natives of the Venezia Giulia as well as of the Trentino fell in action, and not a few were captured by the Austrians and executed. The cases of Cesare Battisti, Nazario Sauro and Fabio Filzi are too well known to be recounted. One episode, which came to my notice and fortunately ended happily, is worth recording as characteristic of the spirit of the Triestini. A young man of good family in Trieste had been enrolled in the Austrian army on the outbreak of hostilities and sent to the Galician front, where he had been severely wounded. He succeeded in getting transferred from one hospital to another until he found himself in one in his native city. As soon as he was well enough he managed by surreptitious means on the eve of Italian intervention to escape across the border into Italy. There he enlisted, and although in the Austrian army he had held the rank of *Oberleutenant* (first lieutenant) and was entitled by the Italian military regulations to a similar rank in the Italian army, he refused to avail himself of a privilege

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only acquired while serving under the hated *Schwarze-gelb*, and he served at first as a private. But by distinguishing himself in action on various sectors of the front he received his commission as an Italian officer, was eventually promoted captain and decorated with the silver medal for valour. All through the years of the War he never received news of his parents, and it was only after the Armistice that he at last heard that they were alive and well. This gallant officer's brother was also a war volunteer in the Italian army.

The only exceptions to the predominant Italian feeling in the Venezia Giulia were the local Socialists. The Socialist party had been treated with every favour by the Imperial and Royal Government, and its organ *Il Lavoratore* of Trieste was the only Italian paper of which the authorities allowed the publication after Italy's intervention; its tone throughout was one of devotion to the Emperor-King and the Central Powers.

By the terms of the Pact of London the whole of the Venezia Giulia, as well as the Trentino, was to be assigned to Italy in the case of a victory of the Allies, with the frontier along the crest of the Julian Alps according to the traditional aspirations of the Italian patriots as recorded above, plus Dalmatia as far as Punta Planka (between Sebenico and Traù). Fiume was to be left to 'Croatia', thereby implying a belief that the end of the War, even if the Allies were victorious, would see the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy still in being, although greatly reduced in territory, with an autonomous Croatia as part of it; in the circumstances Fiume would have been its only port. There was then no question of a Yugoslav or Serb-Croat-Slovene State absorbing all the southern provinces of the Dual Monarchy; at most it was expected that Serbia would secure Bosnia and the Herzegovina

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and an outlet on the Adriatic in Southern Dalmatia, as President Wilson was afterwards to promise them in his Fourteen Points. It will be remembered that in that same document the peoples of Austria-Hungary were only to be given autonomy; there was evidently no idea of the break-up of the Empire, but merely of depriving it of some of its territories in favour of its neighbours. Wilson afterwards repeatedly asserted that he had never heard of those iniquitous 'secret' treaties, least of all of the Pact of London, until he reached Paris after the Armistice. But Colonel House's papers have clearly proved that the whole question had been thrashed out in all its details in a conversation between the President himself and Mr. Balfour in the spring of 1917. That of course was before Yugoslav propaganda had been brought into action and before it suited the President to pose as the semi-divine champion of international virtue against the wicked diplomacy of the past and as the protector of the weaker against the more powerful States.

Up to the very end of the War the Yugoslavs of Austria-Hungary remained profoundly attached to the Monarchy, and even the Slovene deputy Dr. Koroshetz, who was afterwards to become Yugoslav delegate at the Paris Conference and subsequently Prime Minister of the Serb-Croat-Slovene State, repeatedly gave expression to his loyalty to the Emperor-King. No regiments fought with more ardour against the enemies of Austria-Hungary than those of the Yugoslav provinces, and this was the case not only on the Italian front,¹ but also against the

¹ Certain pro-Yugoslav writers in Great Britain have asserted that they only fought with vigour against Italy in their desire to prove that if the Venezia Giulia and Northern Dalmatia had not been promised to Italy by the Pact of London the Yugoslavs would have been allies and not enemies of the Entente.

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Russians and even their Serb brethren. Only in certain units composed of Bosnians and Herzegovinians were there many defections; the units formed of Austro-Hungarian prisoners captured by the Russians and who afterwards voluntarily came to fight enrolled in the Serbian army in Macedonia were nearly all natives of those provinces.

When at the end of October, 1918, the Dual Monarchy, in consequence of the Italian victory of Vittorio Veneto, broke up, the National Council of Zagreb did not even consider the idea of being absorbed by or united to Serbia, but demanded the creation of an independent Yugoslav State consisting exclusively of the ex-Austro-Hungarian provinces inhabited by Yugoslavs. While the Italian troops were advancing through territories to which the Zagreb Council laid claim, it tried to mobilize a Croat-Slovene army to resist the Italians, but the attempt failed, as both Croats and Slovenes were far too exhausted and weary to fight any longer. Nor was the unity even in those provinces complete, and the Narodne Vijece of Ljubliana would not co-operate with the Croat Sabor of Zagreb. It was only after the failure of this attempt that the Croats resigned themselves to the necessity of concluding some form of federation with Serbia, who as an Allied Power could be represented at Paris and appeal to the other Allies against the claims of Italy. After a month of negotiations the Zagreb Council ended on November 24 by making complete dedication to Belgrade, which the Croats appear to have regretted ever since.¹

At the Peace Conference the delimitation of the new frontiers of Italy on the north-east was rendered

¹ Otto Bauer, *Die österreichische Revolution*, Vienna, 1923, pp. 17-20, 133 *et seq.*, and Umberto Nani, in *Educazione fascista*, November, 1928, pp. 686-7.

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difficult because the claims of Italy were opposed not by ex-enemies alone, but by a State which had been an ally and by peoples who, although they had been ex-enemies until the last hour, were now camouflaged as allies under the mantle of the Serbs. Three solutions were then proposed. Italy demanded in the first instance the execution of the Pact of London, to which she afterwards added Fiume, as its inhabitants, terrified at the idea of being placed under the rule of a people whom they regarded as outer barbarians, had sent an urgent appeal to the Italians to be spared that fate and demanding the annexation of their city to Italy. The Yugoslav thesis, expounded by the Dalmatian Croat Dr. Trumbich, was that Trieste, Fiume, Dalmatia and the mountain area of Gorizia be assigned to Yugoslavia, and only the Gorizian plain grudgingly left to Italy. While the official Yugoslav demands were those outlined above there was an active semi-official propaganda, secretly supported by responsible Yugoslav statesmen, which demanded far more—the whole of the ex-Austrian territories claimed by Italy, the province of Udine and perhaps even Venice, which appears included in the Yugoslav propaganda maps within the ideal frontiers of the Yugoslav State. President Wilson, refusing to recognize the validity of the Pact of London, demanded that all Carniola, all Dalmatia, a part of Gorizia-Gradisca and the eastern half of Istria should be given to Yugoslavia on account of the ethnic composition of the inhabitants, but rejected the ethnic factor with regard to Fiume, which, although admittedly an Italian town, must be accorded to Yugoslavia because it would be convenient to that State.

The wrangle over the Adriatic problem lasted for two years, and Italy, in spite of her undoubted rights, did not present her case in the most effective way.

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She would have done better to insist on the execution of the Pact of London pure and simple in the discussions with the Allies who could not in decency have repudiated it, and then, once having secured that, to negotiate with the Yugoslavs for Fiume in exchange for concessions elsewhere. In order to gain her point with the Allies, she might well have exploited Wilson's urgent desire to get the Covenant of the League accepted and included in the text of the Peace Treaties, and the equally urgent desire of Great Britain and France to secure Italy's signature to the treaty of peace with Germany. But unfortunately Italy herself was not united. Within the Government divided counsels prevailed, or at least while one statesman attached more importance to one point another insisted on the greater necessity of securing another, and public opinion was bewildered by the uncertainties in ruling circles. The prestige of Italy was moreover seriously weakened and the authority of the Government shaken by the anarchy in the country and by the savage anti-national propaganda of groups who were prepared to sacrifice their country's claims for the sake of party interest. There were even politicians who would not hesitate to renounce Italy's rights in order to secure the sympathy and perhaps the favours of her adversaries.

At last, after innumerable projects, counter-projects, memoranda and notes had been presented, discussed and rejected at Paris, direct negotiations between Yugoslavia and Italy were undertaken, and as the sinister figure of Wilson receded into the limbo of obscurity, the British and French Governments advised Yugoslavia to accept Italy's very generous terms. At Rapallo, in November, 1920, a treaty was concluded whereby Italy secured the territories assigned to her by the Pact of London, but gave up all her portion

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of Dalmatia (except the purely Italian town of Zara), certain small districts on the Italo-Yugoslav frontier, with most of the islands, while the islands of Cherso, Lussin, Lagosta and Pelagosa remained to Italy; in exchange for these very important concessions all that Italy secured was that Fiume should be declared a free city with a tiny territory consisting of the old *corpus separatum* and a strip of Istria so as to connect it with Italian territory. The suburb of Sušak adjoining Fiume, but historically and ethnically Croatian, was left to Yugoslavia, to whom Porto Baros, an integral part of the port of Fiume, was also ceded by a secret but binding letter of Count Sforza, then Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs.¹ We shall see afterwards what serious consequences this concession produced, and it should be noted that it was almost gratuitous, as at the time the Yugoslavs were so desirous of arriving at a settlement that they were quite prepared to forgo Porto Baros.

The Rapallo Treaty presented many other unsatisfactory features besides the cession of Porto Baros, for Italy had exchanged a very considerable area comprising several Italian communities, which if not numerous were highly civilized and of strongly Italian sentiments and traditions, for the erection of one Italian community with a tiny territory as a free city. It aroused a good deal of resentment in Italy and a large number of Senators protested against it, but at all events it was a solution, and public opinion was relieved at any agreement being concluded which should put an end to the protracted dispute, although, as we shall see, it did not by any means wholly fulfil this expectation. The Santa Margherita Conventions, concluded

¹ Count Sforza denied the existence of this letter both in the Chamber and in the Foreign Affairs Committee, but its existence was revealed when the Yugoslavs demanded its execution.

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in the summer and autumn of 1922, dealt with certain minor points left uncovered by the Rapallo Treaty.

At the time when that treaty was signed Fiume was still in the hands of the soldier-poet D'Annunzio, who with a force of volunteers had seized the town in September, 1919, defying the diplomacy of all Europe and the Government of Italy then ruled by Sig. Nitti. D'Annunzio refused to recognize the treaty, and the Giolitti Government, which had succeeded that of Nitti, sent an armed force against him in Christmas week, 1920, and after a short bombardment obliged him to evacuate Fiume in January following. The free city of Fiume, as created by the Rapallo Treaty, was wholly without vitality and proved incapable of constituting an administration for itself, so that the Italian Government had to maintain troops and police in the town for the preservation of order, and also had to supply its inhabitants with food, because the blockade imposed by Yugoslavia during the D'Annunzio régime had paralysed all trade, and the town needed a long time to recover.

When Sig. Mussolini came into power at the end of October, 1922, he realized that the Rapallo-Santa Margherita settlement was profoundly unsatisfactory, and proceeded to negotiate with Yugoslavia for its revision; in January, 1924, a new treaty, or rather group of treaties, was concluded in Rome. Italy recognized Yugoslavia's sovereignty over Porto Baros and the so-called Delta, and Yugoslavia that of Italy over the town and the rest of the port of Fiume, while the Thaon di Revel dock within the latter was leased to Yugoslavia for fifty years and Yugoslavia leased to Italy the right bank of the Fiume canal.

With the conclusion of the Italo-Yugoslav Treaty of January, 1924, it was hoped that a new era in the relations between the two countries had commenced.

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None the less the course of events did not wholly justify this optimism. As Sig. Mussolini stated in his speech to the Senate on June 5, 1928, relations between two States bordering on each other cannot be indifferent; they can only be of a friendly or a hostile character. 'Excluding the latter horn of the dilemma, and having therefore adopted the principle of a policy of friendship, Italy has loyally practised such a policy towards Yugoslavia and consecrated it in the treaty of 1924.' In order to complete that treaty a series of agreements known as the Nettuno Conventions were concluded in the summer of the following year, covering a number of lesser questions affecting the solution of various aspects of Italo-Yugoslav relations. But for three years those instruments were not ratified by Yugoslavia, and during that period the manifestations of unfriendliness and even of hostility towards Italy in wide sections of public opinion were unceasing. 'Italy', Sig. Mussolini continued in that same speech, 'is further obliged to note that the Treaty of 1924 has failed to create that moral atmosphere whereby friendship descends from the official protocols of Governments and touches the heart of the peoples.'

It is true that Belgrade's inaction was partly due to questions of internal policy, and an agitation was raised in Croatia and Dalmatia against ratification, with the pretext that the agreements would prove particularly injurious to the interests of those provinces. Eventually the opposition to ratification assumed the form of an anti-Serb agitation when the Yugoslav Government in 1928 expressed its intention of ratifying the conventions, which led to violent disputes between the Government and the Croats, but eventually the conventions were ratified.

In Italy public opinion took comparatively little

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interest in the affairs of Yugoslavia, and the Italian Press seldom even mentioned that country at all, but the Yugoslav Press and even certain prominent political men lost no opportunity of inciting the people against Italy and everything Italian. One deputy went to the point of advocating war and prophesying an armistice to be concluded in Venice. A handbook of military instruction issued to the Yugoslav soldiers, revised and recommended by the Ministry of War, is replete with inflammatory matter, and the Italians are repeatedly described as the irreconcilable enemies of the fatherland. It constantly harps on the injustice of Italy's occupation of territories which should by right belong to Yugoslavia, such as 'all Istria, together with Gorizia-Gradisca, Trieste, extending to the Isonzo, the city and environs of Zara, the islands of Cherso, Lussin, Lagosta and Pelagisa'. Anti-Italian feeling often finds even more violent expression, in the shape of public demonstrations accompanied by speeches of extreme ferocity and attacks on persons and institutions.

The causes of this hostility are of a varied nature. While Yugoslavia is torn by internal factions and deep racial and religious differences, hostility to Italy unites sections of the population and parties which in other respects are bitterly averse to each other. Possibly the Belgrade Government is not too unwilling to encourage this anti-Italian attitude as a means of attenuating internal dissensions. We must not forget that there is the traditional hatred of Italy, dating from pre-Yugoslav days, which Austria had instilled into the Slovenes and Croats then in direct contact with the Italian element in the defunct Monarchy. This hatred has been merely intensified by the fact of Italy's possession of territories to which Croats and Slovenes laid claim. On the other hand, the Serbs, who are

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the dominant element in the Triune Kingdom, although they have not the same hereditary hostility to Italy as the above-named peoples and have on many occasions followed a friendly policy towards Italy from whom during the War they received immense benefits, too soon, alas, forgotten, are filled with the most overweening ambitions and think themselves capable of defying the universe. These ambitions extend not only to the ex-Austrian provinces annexed to Italy, but to every district within reach, in Italy, Bulgaria, Austria, Hungary, Albania, Greece and Rumania. There is not a district on the borders of Yugoslavia to which the Belgrade politicians do not lay claim. The Italianization of the Slovenes and Croats of Italy is merely a pretext for agitation, at all events as far as the Serbs are concerned, inasmuch as their own record in the matter of minorities is not such as to entitle them to criticize their neighbours, even with regard to peoples belonging to races analogous to their own, such as the Croats, the Montenegrins and the Macedonians. To the Serbs Croatia, Dalmatia, Montenegro and Macedonia are just as much conquered provinces to be held in subjection as Trieste, Gorizia and Istria would be if they could conquer and annex them.

The Albanian element in the Italo-Yugoslav controversy is dealt with in the chapter on Albania.

The question of the Italians in Dalmatia is not regarded in Italy as an urgent one, and is hardly ever mentioned in the Press or in public speeches, although many meditate on it.

On the other hand, if there are causes of disagreement between the two countries there are also reasons for friendlier relations, especially in the economic field. Italy is Yugoslavia's best customer; her imports therefrom averaged in the years 1924-28 about



FEEDING THE PUPILS OF AN INFANT SCHOOL AT BERGOGNA
(VENEZIA GIULIA)

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690,000,000 lire per annum. In the list of countries exporting to Yugoslavia Italy comes third, being preceded only by Austria and Czechoslovakia; in that same period her sales to Yugoslavia averaged 312,000,000 lire per annum. There is indeed every reason why this trade should increase still further, as Italy is likely to need more and more timber and other raw materials from Yugoslavia, and the latter will buy ever more manufactured goods from Italy. But to achieve this result the Yugoslav authorities should facilitate and not hamper Italo-Yugoslav trade nor even transit trade between third countries and Italian ports, and avoid placing restrictions on the activities of Italian commercial travellers and business men, just as Yugoslav business men are undisturbed in Italy.

Possibly now that Franco-Italian relations have improved, that improvement will be reflected in Italo-Yugoslav relations. The aggressive attitude of the Yugoslavs towards Italy was largely based on the support promised by or hoped for from France. Certain organs of the French Press lent colour to the belief that Yugoslavia could count on French aid for any action against Italy, by suggesting that such an aggressive policy would be welcome and in conformity with the French policy of military alliances against all possible rivals. It is notorious that French steamers regularly unloaded large cargoes of arms at fixed periods in the Yugoslav ports. But subsequently France became somewhat less enthusiastic and indiscriminating in her support of Yugoslav ambitions, and showed some anxiety lest she should be involved in an Italo-Yugoslav quarrel which might prove unfavourable to French interests. Hence her material and moral support of the Belgrade Government policy of adventures somewhat slackened. Doubts appear to have also arisen as to whether all these expensive

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supplies will ever be paid for; they do not therefore appear to be furnished in the same generous quantities as before. Certainly the supply of war material to Yugoslavia is hardly the best way of promoting international peace, and it is to be regretted that even the British Government did not see its way to prevent certain British firms from supplying that country with submarines the object of which, in the peculiar circumstances of the case—the fact that the Yugoslav coast is much more favourably situated to resist aggression by sea than that of almost any other country—is of an exclusively aggressive nature.

But if Yugoslavia is not encouraged in her anti-Italian policy by the reasonable prospect of effective support of some Great Power, there is little likelihood that she will ever proceed to acts of aggression which, without that support, would inevitably lead to results disastrous for her.

The Venezia Giulia, as it is now constituted after the settlements of November, 1920, and January, 1924, consists of five provinces: Trieste, with a stretch of coast to the west and a section of Carniolan hinterland reaching the Yugoslav frontier along the crest of the Julian Alps; Gorizia, comprising most of the old Austrian province of Gorizia-Gradisca (formerly the 'princely county' or *Gefürstete Grafschaft*) and other districts of Carniola; Itria, corresponding to the old Austrian province of that name minus a small strip of territory in the north-east attached to Fiume and some of the Quarnero Islands left to Yugoslavia; Fiume, consisting of the town itself and some districts of Istria and Carniola; and Zara, with a tiny district around it. At the census of 1921 the population was distributed as follows: Trieste, 325,940; Gorizia, 290,707; Fiume, 85,543; Pola (Istria), 299,295;

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Zara, 19,697: total, 1,021,182. Of these, as we have seen, some 40 to 45 per cent. were reputed by the last Austrian census to be Slavs—Slovenes in Trieste, Gorizia and Western Istria, Croats in Eastern Istria, Fiume and Zara. To-day the proportions have changed, even apart from the wilful errors of the Austrian calculations. Many of the Slav railwaymen and Civil Servants, who were natives of other provinces, have returned to their homes, and other Slavs recently migrated have, from dislike of the Italians, moved into Yugoslavia, although it should be added that a certain number of Croats, intolerant of the Balkan methods of government enforced by the Serbs in Yugoslavia, have preferred to settle in Italian territory.¹ In 1900 there were some 70,000 Italian citizens from Italy proper established in the Venezia Giulia for purposes of business, who did not figure in the estimates of the relative proportions of Italian and Slavs; but to-day the Italians from the old provinces, as they are now called, not only have remained and swell the Italian percentage, but have grown to 200,000, without counting the Civil Servants and the garrisons. The relative proportions are now probably about 700,000 Italians and 300,000 Slavs, and the latter are tending to diminish relatively, although not absolutely.

The history of Trieste since the annexation is closely bound up with that of the Bolshevik outbreaks

¹ The feelings of many of the Yugoslavs of the former Austro-Hungarian provinces may be gauged by a remark made by Dr. Koroshetz, then Yugoslav Prime Minister, to a young foreign scholar visiting the country. On being asked what he was doing in Yugoslavia, the foreigner replied that he had come to make a comparison between the Austrian and the Yugoslav administrations, to which Dr. Koroshetz retorted in German: 'There is no possible comparison. The Austrian administration was a model one. With these people there is nothing to be done.'

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and the subsequent rise and triumph of Fascism. In the early days of Italian Trieste the great majority of the inhabitants gave way to the wildest manifestations of enthusiasm, and no one thought of anything except the joy of being liberated from the hated Austrian yoke. But the Socialists and Communists, who as far as political action went were at Trieste practically a single party, and were wholly free from patriotic sentiment, adopted an attitude of open hostility to the Italian authorities, insulted and outraged officers in the streets, and committed innumerable acts of criminal violence, including not a few murders. Their slogan was opposition to all nationalisms and support of the Russian Communist International. According to Sig. Giunta,¹ what they really wanted was 'to take advantage of the transition period from one régime to the other, prevent the consolidation of the new state of things, and, holding aloof both from Slav and Italian nationalism, form a strong international nucleus, a "Julian Republic", whence the revolution should spread to the conquest of the Kingdom and join up afterwards with Russian Communism'.² For many months, owing to the incredible feebleness of the governments of the day, Trieste came to be almost a fief of the seditious parties. The Triestine patriots, who had sacrificed everything and risked everything for the national cause, were ignored by the authorities and regarded with suspicion or at least as nuisances, and many favours and appointments were conferred on persons who had been notoriously of Austrian sympathies or even agents of the departed Government and were now supported by influential Socialist and Communist leaders. The non-Socialist Slavs hoped to take advantage of the chaos in which the city was

¹ Now a deputy and Under-Secretary to the Prime Minister.

² In *Gerarchia*, September, 1927, p. 796 *et seq.*

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plunged and of the absence of all authority to promote the Yugoslav cause. It was at one moment actually reported that an invasion of the Venezia Giulia was being planned at Ljubliana to drive the Italians into the sea and bring about the annexation of the whole area to the Yugoslav State.

About this time the Trieste Fascio was formed and began to acquire importance, while in many other parts of Italy the movement was still in its infancy. This is due to its activity in conducting a struggle both against the Communist and other seditious movements and for the defence of Italy's frontiers and territorial integrity. On May 24, 1920,¹ the Fascio, led by Francesco Giunta, organized a patriotic demonstration to commemorate Italy's intervention in the World War. The demonstration aroused widespread enthusiasm throughout the Italian element, thereby breaking the spell of Red domination. The Fascists also organized a service of frontier guards to prevent any possible incursion from the other side by armed komitadji bands. On July 12 the news reached Trieste of the murder of Commander Gulli and the mechanic Rossi of the Italian cruiser *Puglia* at Spalato. The Fascio at once organized a protest meeting; the shops were closed at 6 p.m. and the citizens invited to commemorate the victims of this dastardly crime in the Piazza dell' Unità. During the ceremony a Fascist was stabbed by a Slav, whereupon a cortège was formed and advanced towards the Hôtel Balkan, the headquarters of the Slav organizations. On approaching the building the demonstrators were greeted with a volley of shots, and even some bombs were thrown at them, with the result that an officer was killed and several persons wounded. The Balkan

¹ The first Fascio in Italy had been founded by Benito Mussolini on March 23, 1919, in Milan.

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was then actually besieged by the crowd, and finally some youths succeeded in getting into it and setting it on fire.¹ The very next day large numbers of citizens came to the Fascist headquarters and applied for membership, and by the end of the year there were 12,000 Fascist in Trieste, with a daily paper of their own and a chamber of labour, for Fascist syndicalism was already beginning to organize a labour movement which was patriotic and not revolutionary. The Fasci of Trieste and of the other Julian towns and the Fascist labour organizations proceeded to tackle the various economic and civic problems of the area, where post-war economic conditions were by no means easy. At the general election of 1921 three out of the four deputies for Trieste were Fascists, and in the rest of the Venezia Giulia several Fascists were returned, besides some Slavs and Communists. But as long as the feeble, weak-kneed agnostic Ministries succeeded each other in Rome, neither the political nor the economic problems could be solved satisfactorily; the most that could be done was to carry on, amid a welter of sedition and chaos, and to hope for better times.

The Venezia Giulia presents certain features of interest for the traveller, and although it is not so rich in artistic or natural beauty as many other parts of Italy, it is by no means devoid of such attractions. The chief centre is the great seaport of Trieste at the head of the Adriatic opposite Venice. The city is of very ancient origin, but except for the fine early mediæval cathedral of San Giusto on a steep hill dominating the town and the bay, Trieste possesses few remains of its past. It is to all intents and

¹ The bitter'y anti-Italian Czechoslovak Consul in Trieste attempted to organize an international consular protest against this act, but he failed owing to lack of support.

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purposes a modern city, having grown up from a large village in the last two hundred years, particularly in the last century. For a short period it had been under Venetian rule, but during the rest of its history it was either a free commune or under the Empire. In 1719 it was declared a free port of the Empire, and its trade at once began to increase. Few names of historic importance are associated with it, although Napoleon's sister Caroline, the ex-Queen of Naples, lived for a time at Trieste, and the sinister Fouché, Duke of Otranto ended his days there, Winckelmann was murdered and Sir Richard Burton was British Consul-General in that city. After the loss of Venetia in 1866 it was practically the only port of Austria connected by rail with Vienna and the other parts of the Empire, the Dalmatian ports being inadequate and without communications with the interior. Austria consequently, while ruthlessly persecuting the Italian element of the population, conferred many favours on its trade and shipping. The Austrian Lloyd, which had its headquarters at Trieste, ended by securing almost a monopoly of the Levant trade and promoted Austrian political interests. The city soon outstripped its old rival Venice, which had sunk to a mere tourist and artistic centre, and became a cosmopolitan port with a mixed population, in the trade of which people from all parts of the Dual Monarchy, Germany and other European countries, the Balkan States, Turkey and Greece, played an important part. The total trade of Trieste in 1909-13 amounted to an annual average of nearly $5\frac{1}{2}$ million tons, and in 1913 it was over 6 millions. Many goods, especially groceries and colonial products, which were a speciality of Triestine trade, were imported into Italy through Trieste. The docking facilities were at the time among the most advanced in Europe.

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The Triestini fully realized that in the event of annexation to Italy the city would lose its privileged position as the only outlet to the sea for the vast and wealthy provinces of Austria, and become merely one of many Italian ports and be cut off from its natural hinterland. Yet, although they are essentially a business people, they never hesitated an instant and continued to work for annexation to Italy. So strong was the spirit of *Italianità* in Trieste that even many foreigners established there were carried away by it and absorbed into it. The war volunteer Spiridione Xydias, of Greek origin, met a hero's death in the ranks of the Italian army during the War. The Jewish community, which is traditionally associated with mercantile pursuits, was exceptionally ardent in its Italian patriotism, and one of its most esteemed members, Prof. Venezian, also a war volunteer, was one of the first to fall in action.

During the World War the trade of Trieste was reduced to practically nothing at all, and a large part of the accumulated capital of the city was consumed or invested in Austrian war loans which afterwards became worthless paper. When on November 3, 1918, after the victory of Vittorio Veneto, the Italian expeditionary force led by General Petitti di Roreto landed at the quays of Trieste, a new epoch in the city's history commenced. The situation created by the liberation from Austrian rule was somewhat different from that which had been expected. It was not as if the Austrian Empire had continued to exist and, being deprived of Trieste, had deflected its trade to some other Austrian port, for the Empire was no more. The old hinterland of Trieste was split up among six separate States, without counting Hungary, who had always done far more business through Fiume than through Trieste. Italy herself had acquired the whole

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of the Venezia Giulia, and at that time part of Dalmatia as well; to Yugoslavia most of Carniola, part of Styria and Southern Dalmatia had been attributed; Czechoslovakia comprised Bohemia and Moravia and a part of Austrian Silesia (to say nothing of Northern Hungary); Poland had acquired Galicia and the other half of Silesia; Rumania held the Bukovina; the new Austrian Republic retained the remnants of the disrupted Empire. Of these States only Italy and Yugoslavia had outlets on the Adriatic, the ports of Poland and Rumania were on other seas, and Czechoslovakia and Austria had no sea coast at all. Apart from the products of its local industries, which were by no means unimportant, Trieste thus still remained the natural outlet for at least a large part of the territories of the old Empire. But it was now a foreign port to all of them; those States which had ports of their own of course preferred that their trade should go thither rather than to Trieste, while for Austria and Czechoslovakia it was on the same level with the ports of other countries, particularly Hamburg and Bremen, and with the Danube route to the Black Sea, so that it had to rely on its own natural advantages to retain a part of its former trade.

During the immediate post-war period the economic situation of the whole of the Succession States, especially of the Austrian Republic, was disastrous. But, on the other hand, the need for goods of all kinds was so urgent that Trieste at once resumed its activity, although on a smaller scale than before the War. In 1919 that trade amounted to 2,857,431 tons, and in 1920 to 3,106,827. But by 1921 the full effects of the post-war crisis began to be felt, and the returns fell in that year to 2,803,085 tons. In 1922 there was a slight improvement, which was accentuated in 1923 and still more so in the following year, when trade

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rose to 5,841,431 tons, almost equalling the returns for 1913. But the general European crisis of 1925-26 had its effect in reducing the city's trade to 5,465,978 and 4,765,076 tons respectively; the years 1927 and 1928 showed improvement, the tonnage in the latter year being 5,199,029. There appears to be a continued tendency towards increase.

As the years passed the economic conditions of the city's hinterland improved, and with the advent of the Fascist Government in Italy order was restored and the improvement and eventually the stabilization of the currency, although at first it produced financial stringency, in the long run tended to create a return to a normal situation. The areas which fed the trade of Trieste came to be the same as in pre-war days, and if Austria to-day is poorer than she was in 1913 she is much better off than in 1919-25, and Czechoslovakia has recovered nearly all her old prosperity. It is true, however, that goods conveyed to or from the former country to Trieste have to cross one customs barrier which did not exist before, and those to or from the latter two such barriers, and although goods in transit do not pay duty (and the bulk of Trieste's trade is transit trade), the mere existence of customs barriers involves delay. Consequently Hamburg is competing seriously with Trieste for the Czechoslovak and Austrian trade, and it is only the shorter distance between Trieste and the Levant ports as compared with that between the latter and Hamburg and the so-called Adriatic tariff which operates in favour of the Italian port. The Yugoslav trade, which is not very important, except as regards timber, naturally tends towards the Yugoslav ports, especially Sušak, and that of Hungary gravitates towards Fiume. A certain part of the trade of all these countries goes by water down the Danube, but this is of course no novelty.

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The chief elements in favour of Trieste are the Adriatic tariff, which reduces the cost of transport, and the fact that there is a large number of regular sailings from Trieste to all parts of the world, so that the exporter can count on his goods being shipped at fixed dates without long and uncertain delays. The port, moreover, is admirably equipped; under Austria a good deal had already been done, but new improvements have been subsequently introduced, and when the Duca d'Aosta dock, which will be the second *punto franco*, or free zone, now in construction, is finished, Trieste will have a really first-rate harbour organization.

The passenger services are also important, as the ex-Austrian Lloyd, now Lloyd Triestino, the Cosulich and other lines sailing from Trieste possess excellent steamers and continue to increase and improve their fleets. The Italian lines enjoy almost a monopoly of the first-class passenger service for the ports of the Levant, and there are luxurious steamers sailing from Trieste for Egypt, India, the Far East, America, etc.

The Triestine industries are also of considerable importance, especially the *Stabilimento tecnico*, the ship-building yards at Monfalcone and elsewhere, and other large plants.

While the transit trade, in goods and passengers, and the local industries are looking up, local trade is less prosperous. Trieste was formerly the intermediate centre for coffee, sugar and other imported goods which were negotiated there and then re-shipped to all parts of the old Empire and foreign lands, especially to the Near East. To-day, owing to a general tendency of all countries to try to eliminate the middle-man, this trade has greatly declined; the Brazilian exporter, for instance, instead of sending

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his coffee to Trieste to be re-shipped thence to Greece and Turkey, is apt to send it direct, even in quite small shipments, to every little Levantine seaport without touching Trieste. Also a certain number of very able German middle-men, who had made a speciality of this form of trade, have departed, leaving no competent successors behind them. The sugar trade is in better condition than coffee, but in a general way there does not seem much likelihood of a revival of the intermediary business, and other forms of activity must be sought for. The two most important insurance companies of Italy have their headquarters in Trieste, and after the annexation special exemptions were granted to them from the monopoly existing in the old provinces in favour of the State Insurance Institute in the field of life insurance, as it was felt that it would fall too hardily on the Triestini if, after all the sufferings and losses of the War, the activities of these two admirably organized insurance companies were to be seriously curtailed.

The general aspect of Trieste is not as beautiful as that of most Italian cities. The streets are wide and regular, the buildings large and solid, but undistinguished, and there are few features of architectural beauty old or new. The port is the chief centre of the city's life, and is full of interest for all who wish to follow the vicissitudes of international sea-borne traffic, for the whole commercial life of the Near East seems to concentrate among the quays and in the docks of Trieste. The shops are well supplied with goods of excellent quality and great variety. There are several first-class hotels, frequented by a very cosmopolitan clientèle, especially on the arrival or departure of the larger steamers, and a number of enormous cafés which are filled to overflowing at certain hours. The inhabitants are active and business-like, and the

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port operations are carried out with speed and efficiency.

The environs of the city are varied and beautiful. The hills immediately behind it are thickly wooded until one reaches the bare Carso region. Along the coast both north and south of Trieste are many attractive seaside resorts, such as Grado and Porto Rose, largely frequented by visitors from the Succession States, especially from Czechoslovakia. The castle of Miramer, with its tragic memories of the Emperor Maximilian of Mexico, is in a wonderful situation, but the building itself is modern and singularly ugly.

Trieste is within easy reach of the great Carso battlefields, which for every Italian are sacred ground. It was round Gorizia, the capital of one of the five provinces of the Venezia Giulia, that some of the bloodiest battles in the whole War were fought; it is a name which none of us can hear without emotion, and represents for Italians what Ypres means for Britons or Verdun for Frenchmen. The hills surrounding Gorizia, beautiful in their spring verdure, but sinister in their war-time record, were drenched with the best blood of Italy, and it is on their slopes that the real unity of the Italian people was finally cemented. The Carso proper, extending from south of the town to the neighbourhood of Trieste, is a rocky wilderness of peculiar formation, for the masses of stone are split up into innumerable fissures and crannies and bristling with points and edges as sharp as knives. During the battles every shell on exploding was multiplied tenfold, so that not only fragments of steel but also pieces of rock not less terrible scattered death and destruction around them.

At the outbreak of the War the Austrians held this powerful defensive bulwark, and in the imminence of

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Italian intervention they proceeded to strengthen it to a formidable degree, so that when the Italians, after crossing the Isonzo plain, began to advance up the slopes they were exposed to a deadly fire. For the Austrians, too, the Carso eventually became a place of horror, as in the course of the War artillery improved, the use of high explosives became more general and trench mortars were introduced. Most of the Austrian positions were to the east of the Isonzo, but the Sabotino and Podgora hills west of the river were also held, and offered the most strenuous resistance. With infinite effort and awful losses the Italians fought their way inch by inch, up the San Michele and conquered San Martino del Carso and Doberdò¹ with its wicked-looking dead lake in a little valley below the village; the Sabotino, which had been fruitlessly attacked many times and caused very heavy losses to the assailants, was at last captured as the result of the brilliant tactics of General Badoglio,² with hardly any losses. This success sealed the fate of Gorizia, which fell in August, 1916, but some of the positions dominating it still remained in the enemy's hands, San Marco, San Daniele, San Gabriele and Monte Santo, a bevy of saints whose names were to assume a deadly significance, and desperate fighting for their possession continued for over a year. Other positions were captured by the Italians, until in the late summer of 1917, after another series of great battles, the Bainsizza plateau north-east of Gorizia, and the lower slopes of the Monte Hermada, the advanced defence of Trieste, were reached. But the strain had been fearful, the losses beyond belief, and there were no more reserves

¹ A whole volume of the Archduke Frederick's memoirs is entitled *Doberdò*, and is devoted to the fighting round that village.

² He is now a Field-Marshal and has been appropriately created Marquis of the Sabotino.

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to make them good. Add to this the depressing effect of the collapse of Russia and the Russian revolution and the poisonous campaign of treachery carried on by the Socialists and Communists, and even by certain seditious Clerical groups, encouraged and financed by the German and Austrian secret service through the complacent intermediary of the Socialist parties of the Central Powers, undermined Italy's power of resistance. Caporetto was due in part to certain military errors, but chiefly to the war-weariness of the troops and the moral causes indicated above. In a few days all the positions conquered at such terrible cost of Italian lives were lost, the Second Army was driven back in confusion, and the Third, which had never been defeated, found its left flank exposed by the failure of the Second and was forced to fall back too.

It seemed as if all were lost and that no attempt to retrieve the disaster were possible. But after a retreat of scores of kilometres the Asiago-Grappa-Piave line was reached and a new defensive position constituted, which held out valiantly in the face of a far stronger enemy flushed with its recent victory. Behind the new line the army was reorganized and the watchword was *di qui non si passi*. The enemy launched many attacks, but they were all driven back with heavy losses on both sides, and later British and French divisions contributing valiantly to the defence. In October, 1918, exactly a year and a day after Caporetto, the Piave was re-crossed and the great victory of Vittorio Veneto achieved, whereby not only was the Austro-Hungarian army completely defeated, but the Empire itself destroyed. Thus did the War end with the liberation of the *Italia irredenta*—now *redenta*—but also with the liberation of Italy from the ever-present menace of an attack by the overwhelming forces of Austria-Hungary. The Gorizia zone thus means for

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Italy something more than the annexation of a few scores of square kilometres of territory.

• South of Gorizia rises Monte San Michele, dominating the Isonzo valley. To reach it a good motor road leads from Gorizia southwards, through the famous Vallone del Carso, a broad depression well sheltered from artillery fire between high rocky ridges, wherein vast quantities of supplies and munitions were stored. The upper slopes of San Michele have been declared a *zona sacra*, and all the relics of the War, including the great dug-outs in the solid rock for heavy artillery, are left untouched. From the summit we have an admirable view of the whole battle area—the broad plain of the Isonzo, now green and well tilled, the little towns of Gradisca, Sagrado, Sangrado di Merna, the winding Vippacco valley, farther to the north opposite Gorizia, the Podgora and the Saboino, and farther still the Monte Santo and the other three war saints—Gabriele, Daniele and Marco. Close by is San Martino del Carso; the present writer remembers it in 1916, when a fragment of wall about six feet high pierced by a tiny barred window was the only sign of what had been human habitation—all the rest had been flattened out by ceaseless shell-fire. To-day the village has been rebuilt, and shows no trace of the devastations of war.

Around and behind San Michele stretches the dreary Carso, where only the *doline*, small patches of soil down at the bottom of strange well-like depressions in the rock, are cultivated. Some of these *doline* are only a few square yards in extent, but the industrious inhabitants make the best of their sterile land, and by dint of untiring effort force it to produce as much as is humanly possible.

Gorizia itself is a pleasant little town of no particular interest to the sightseer, save for its memories. Historically it is important as the capital of an ancient

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fief of the Empire, but few traces of antiquity exist to-day, except the castle. There are a number of imposing palaces, of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, belonging to local families of some consequence, several of them Germanized, but during the War it suffered very great damage, first when it was held by the Austrians and bombarded by the Italians, and later after the Italian victory of August, 1916, when it was bombarded by the Austrians, especially in the last months before Caporetto, for the enemy was ever within field-gun range of it on the east side. It has now been almost entirely rebuilt, and only about a dozen houses, over the ownership of which legal disputes are pending, still show traces of destruction.

After Trieste, the most important seaport of the Venezia Giulia is Fiume, but its present conditions are absolutely abnormal. I need not repeat the well-known story of its post-war vicissitudes, which made of it for two years one of the most dangerous storm centres of Europe. The solution adopted at Rome in 1924, when such modifications of the earlier agreements as were possible were effected, has resulted in the creation of a quite fantastic frontier, which creeps round the town, leaving only a narrow strip at one point connecting it with the rest of Italian territory. By the cession to Yugoslavia of Porto Baros the port of Fiume is cut in two, and a wall has been built across one of the moles to separate Italy from Yugoslavia, and a tiny river separating Fiume from Sušak is spanned by a bridge with Italian sentries, police and customs officials at one end of it and Yugoslavs at the other. The timber trade is mostly concentrated at Sušak, both because the timber is grown in Yugoslav territory and the exporters naturally prefer to ship it from a port of their own without crossing a customs barrier, and because there are wide open spaces available for storing

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it; other goods requiring more adequate shelter, which is lacking at Sušak, concentrate at Fiume, where there are excellent and well-equipped warehouses and other facilities.

Fiume, it must be remembered, was created by Hungary, who wished to have a Hungarian port for her own trade, independently of Austria, and not be obliged to send goods to Trieste. But at that time Sušak, although belonging to Croatia-Slavonia, which enjoyed administrative autonomy, was politically under Hungary and formed an integral part of the Fiume port-complex. The Budapest Government showered all possible favours on Fiume-Sušak, endowing it with modern equipment of every kind. Now that Fiume is Italian and Sušak Yugoslav the trade is sharply divided between the two halves of the one port. The trade of Hungary still goes to Fiume to a considerable extent, but it is very much less important than it was before the War, and much of what was once Hungarian trade is now the trade of Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia or Rumania, and is consequently not attracted towards Fiume any more than to other foreign ports, so that Fiume must only count on its natural advantages to secure a share of it. In 1913 the trade of Fiume-Sušak was 4,037,499 tons; like that of Trieste, it was totally suspended during the War, and the suspension lasted for several years after the Armistice, owing to its abnormal political conditions. In 1924, when a more or less normal régime was re-established, it only amounted to 650,214 (not including Sušak) tons. The three following years saw a considerable improvement (1,320,155, 1,598,109, and 1,480,080 tons).¹ It is still considerably above that of Sušak, which is only

¹ The higher figure for 1926 as compared with 1925 and 1927 was due to the British coal strike and the consequent increase in the exports of coal from Poland via Fiume.

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about half a million tons, but even the joint trade of the two ports is inferior to that of pre-war times.

The obvious and sensible solution would be to place the whole of the Fiume-Sušak port system under a single joint Italo-Yugoslav harbour board; Italy had proposed such a scheme, but Yugoslavia rejected it, preferring to see even the trade of Sušak hampered rather than that of both Sušak and Fiume prosperous.

Some of the industries of Fiume are looking up, but others are languishing; the town lacks capital, its old accumulations having to a large extent been consumed during the War and post-war years of suspended animation. But there are fairly good prospects for improvement in this field, as the Fiumani are certainly not lacking in enterprise, even if they are not equal to the Triestini. The agriculture of the province is not of great importance and differs little from that of the rest of the area. In the upper valley of the Timavo the soil is fertile and well cultivated, and the Monte Nevoso area has been admirably re-afforested through the enterprise of one large landowner, Prince Schönburg-Waldenburg. His estates spread over into Yugoslavia, and during the negotiations for delimiting the frontier he spared no effort to get Italian territory to comprise the whole of his estates, as he had opted for Italian nationality; but this did not prove possible, and the part of his property which is in Yugoslavia is to all intents and purposes confiscated as, like other landlords in that country, he cannot collect his rents. Other parts of the province are sterile Carsic lands.

The tourist industry at Abbazia, Laurana and other points along the coast is beginning to revive. These various resorts are of great natural beauty with their rich vegetation and magnificent views of sea and mountain and islands, and well supplied with good

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hotels and other resources, and they enjoy an admirable climate practically all the year round. They are also within easy reach of the richer inland parts of the Succession States, particularly Czechoslovakia and the cities of Vienna and Budapest, whence increasing numbers of tourists are attracted to them, to say nothing of those from the rest of Italy. Unfortunately they are but little known to British travellers, who might well do worse than visit them.

The political situation in the Venezia Giulia has always been affected by the coexistence of Italians and Slavs. Under Austria, as we have seen, the Slav element was everywhere favoured (except at Fiume, which was under Slavophobe Hungary and in any case enjoyed a wide measure of autonomy), at the expense of the Italian. Naturally, after the annexation this state of things ceased to exist, and the Slavs, both as Austrophiles and on account of their racial affinities with the people of Yugoslavia, were not favourably disposed towards Italy. But by no means all the Slavs are opposed to the Italian régime. In many districts the two elements are intermingled, and this in some cases makes for collaboration, while in others it intensifies racial feeling. The majority of the Slavs are primitive and ignorant and easily moulded in one sense or another according to the ability of their leaders, but they are on the whole good, hard-working people. In the Slav villages near Trieste, where the people are under the control of the Slav lawyers and politicians in the city—by no means all of the natives of it—anti-Italian tendencies are more pronounced, while in the remoter districts the Slavs usually end by getting on to terms of good neighbourhood with the Italians and are adapting themselves not unwillingly to the new order of things. Those who have performed their military duties in the Italian army compare the condi-

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tions in that service with those to which their fathers and elder brothers had to submit under Austria and cannot fail to be struck with the improvement. This is still more striking when compared with the conditions of their kinsmen beyond the Yugoslav frontier. The same remarks apply to the comparison between the level of civilization in Italy and in Yugoslavia.

There are two categories of Slavs who are still opposed to Italian rule, and they are the same categories as are anti-Italian in the Alto Adige, viz. the priests and the 'intelligentzia'. The priests and the schoolmasters were selected by Austria for their unswerving devotion to the Habsburgs. In the case of the clergy, their leader, the Prince-Archbishop of Gorizia, is an uncompromising opponent, but is respected in his obstinacy even by the Italians. The Conciliation between the Vatican and the Italian Kingdom should go far to eliminate the hostility of the Slav clergy, as it can no longer base its opposition to Italian rule on the alleged sacrilegious character of the Italian Government.

During the first years of Italian rule, the Slav schools, institutions, societies and newspapers remained undisturbed, as was the case with the German schools, etc., in the Alto Adige. But, as in the Alto Adige, this tolerant attitude failed to conciliate the Slav extremists, and an unscrupulous anti-Italian propaganda from beyond the frontier with the complicity of certain local leaders, was conducted; the programme of a still greater Yugoslavia extending from the Black Sea and the Ægean to the Isonzo and beyond was regarded as merely adjourned and the Italian régime as provisional. The inadequate manner in which the Italian claims at the Peace Conference and after had been defended encouraged Slav leaders in this belief, and the Slav

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masses were warned that if they did accept Italian offers of conciliation they would be made to suffer for it afterwards.

The rise of Fascism and its subsequent advent to power put an end to the open propaganda of Irredentism and hatred for all things Italian. The Slav workers asked for nothing better than to be left in peace to attend to their daily labours; the peasants who form the great majority of the Slav elements had no wish to be drawn into revolutionary plots and agitations. The intellectual group naturally regretted the gradual Italianization of Slavs, but many of them are resigned to it as inevitable. One prominent Slav leader admitted to the Prefect of Trieste that the Slavs of the Venezia Giulia were bound to be absorbed by the Italians in time, and that the only difference between his view and that of the Italians was that he would prefer the absorption to be effected slowly and by degrees, whereas the latter were trying to effect it too quickly.

Education is now carried on in Italian, as in the Alto Adige, and the rising generation is rapidly learning the Italian language, although of course the Slavs continue to talk Slovene (or Croat) in their homes. A great many even of the adults are becoming bilingual. As in the Alto Adige, admirable work is done in the Venezia Giulia by the *Opera nazionale Italia redenta*, especially by the creation of infant schools and other forms of social welfare. In the secondary schools the Slav languages are taught, although the language of tuition is always Italian. A certain number of Slav youths go to the secondary schools and eventually to the universities of Yugoslavia, returning to Italy for the holidays or at the end of their course. The Yugoslav authorities grant many facilities to youths from the Italian provinces in order to induce them to get their

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education in Yugoslavia and thus keep up their Yugoslav sentiments. But the Italian authorities now do the same thing and offer the Slav youths inducements to attend the Italian universities.

Various Slav societies were dissolved for seditious activities, and the same fate befell the *Edinost*, the Slav paper of Trieste. But as the Slovenes are great readers, even though they have a very poor literature of their own (this cannot be said of the Serbo-Croats, who have a considerable literature, some of it of respectable quality and real value), the publication of two papers has now been authorized, one in Slovene and the other in Croat, both printed at Gorizia and under the responsibility of Dr. Besednjak, a former Slovene deputy in the Italian Parliament and delegate to the Federation of League of Nations Societies as representative of the Slav minorities.

In one respect the problem of the *allogeni* or alien element is more difficult in the Venezia Giulia than in the Alto Adige. The economic situation of the Slavs is much less favourable than that of the Germans. The Slav population is the poorest section, as the most prosperous part of the Venezia Giulia is the sea coast, especially the towns, where the Italian element is absolutely predominant. The tourist traffic, which is very important and active in the Alto Adige, exists only on a much smaller scale in the Venezia Giulia, and what there is of it is likewise concentrated in the Italian districts. Except at Trieste, Monfalcone, Pola and Fiume, there are few industries to absorb any large part of the Slav population. There are schemes for harnessing the Isonzo and other rivers for the production of electric power, and some of them are in course of execution, but it will be several years before they come into operation.

There is another considerable difference between the

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problem of the Germans of the Alto Adige and that of the Julian Slavs, viz. in the character of the neighbours beyond the frontier, a difference which operates in various ways. Italy's neighbours beyond the Brenner are a people of ancient civilization and high modern culture, and if this makes the assimilation of the Alto-atesini slower and more difficult than is the case with the Slavs, on the other hand it is easier to arrive at a friendly understanding between peoples on similar planes of culture than between those who are separated by a wide gap. The Yugoslav State is essentially a Balkan land, or at least the dominant element is a Balkan race with Oriental traditions and a far more backward level of civilization than either Italy or Germany. This should make the absorption and assimilation of the Julian Slavs easier, as there is no tradition of high Slav civilization to oppose it. But the possibilities of serious friction with the Yugoslavs are much greater than with the Germans. It is of course possible to exaggerate the importance of the criminal activities of the Orjuna and other organizations of a komitadji character beyond the frontier, and often cases of ordinary crime in the Venezia Giulia are attributed to political motives. But political crimes sometimes are committed and may lead to reprisals and international complications.

At the elections of March, 1929, the immense majority of the Slav voters went to the polls and voted for the Government list, only a small number of 'noes' being recorded. But in the environs of Pisino in Istria a group of Slovenes of anti-Italian sentiments, five in number, lay in wait for a party of voters from two villages on their way to the polls at Pisino, and fired on them with rifles, killing one and wounding another, both of them Slovenes (like the murderers), their only object being to terrify the inhabitants and thus prevent

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them from voting. The murderers were apprehended and openly confessed their crime and its motives, and it was ascertained that they had been acting in collusion with and on behalf of Slav political organizations from beyond the frontier which were supplying the sinews of war; the leader of the band, Vladimir Gortan, in fact, was constantly going back and forth across the frontier. The whole episode and the evidence brought out at the trial before the Special Tribunal for the Security of the State, which sat at Pola in October, 1929, showed that Slav population as a whole was peaceful and loyal, and that the only means deemed adequate to promote agitation and disorder were murder and terrorism. Gortan was condemned to death and the other four bandits to thirty years' penal servitude.

As in the Alto Adige, so in the Venezia Giulia, it is very important that only the best officials should be placed in charge in places where there is a mixed population. Here, again, the same remarks as those which I made with regard to the Alto Adige are applicable, viz. that while the higher officials are men of ability and character, among the lesser fry, such as the minor police functionaries, customs officers, the clerical staff and the podestà of some of the smaller communes, occasionally less desirable elements have managed to creep in, and if they usually end by being found out and got rid of, even their temporary presence is harmful.

Apart from these minor difficulties, there is every reason to hope that the solution of the various problems of the Venezia Giulia is merely a question of time.

Before ending this chapter I must say a few words on the question of Dalmatia.

The history of Dalmatia is indissolubly connected with that of Italy, particularly with Rome and Venice.

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In Roman times the Dalmatian cities were centres of a highly developed Latin culture, of which traces survive in the imposing palace of Diocletian at Spalato, comprising within its walls the whole of the picturesque mediæval town, and in many other monuments all over the province. In the Middle Ages Dalmatia was part of the Byzantine Empire, but, as we have seen, by the end of the tenth century, Venice had asserted her rule over it and the Doge, Pietro Orseolo II, assumed the title of Duke of Dalmatia. All down the Dalmatian coast a number of city communities of Latin civilization had grown up and achieved a high level of prosperity, while Ragusa had a mixed Latin-Slav culture. The Byzantine Empire, Hungary and for a short time the Croatian kings disputed for the suzerainty over Dalmatia as a whole, while the coast towns, with the exception of Ragusa, looked to Venice, to whom they were bound by ties of race and language, for protection. In the later Middle Ages Hungary prevailed and ruled over the interior, the towns alone owing allegiance to the *Serenissima*, but in the fifteenth century the whole province came under Venetian rule, which lasted until the wars of the French Revolution, Ragusa alone, wedged in between the two Turkish enclaves of Klek and Sutorina, retaining a precarious independence. The Dalmatians, both Italian and Slav, showed a deep devotion to Venice, whose dialect came to be the language for the educated classes, as well as the common tongue of the whole population of the coast towns. In the interior and among the peasantry a primitive Slav dialect was spoken. Monuments of the purest Venetian architecture arose in every town, and even in Ragusa the exquisite Rector's Palace, the custom house, the Dominican and Franciscan convents are gems of that style. To this day the general appearance of the Dalmatian towns is essentially Italian and

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Venetian, and everywhere we see the Venetian lion over palace and fortress, and everyone who aspires to be regarded as cultivated speaks Italian, even though the harmonious old Latin names of the towns are transformed out of recognition from Spalato, Ragusa and Cattaro to the barbarous-sounding Split, Dubrovnik and Kotor.

By the Treaty of Campoformio (1797) Dalmatia, like the rest of the Venetian dominions, was handed over to Austria by Napoleon; by the Peace of Presburg in 1805 it was annexed to France, who also seized the Republic of Ragusa in 1808. At the Peace of Vienna in 1815 Dalmatia shared the fate of the rest of the ex-territories of Venice, and again were incorporated in the Austrian Empire. After the war of 1866, although Venetia became part of the Italian Kingdom, Dalmatia, like the Trentino and the Venezia Giulia, remained Austrian.

Ethnically the Slav element was predominant, although the proportion of Italians was probably far larger than the 3 per cent. of the bowdlerized Austrian statistical returns. The great mass of the peasantry and seafaring folk of the coasts and islands were at that time very ignorant and undeveloped, with no definite national feeling, and they might easily have been moulded into either Italian or Slavs according to the education and guidance imparted to them by their leaders.¹ We have seen how Austria, acting in co-operation with the Slav cultural organizations in Croatia-Slavonia, which for political reasons she then saw fit to favour, systematically Slavized the Dalmatians, and in the course of half a century every trace of *Italianità* was stamped out, except in a few of the coast towns, until even there it was overwhelmed in a Slav wave, Zara alone retaining its Italian majority.

¹ See the previously-quoted report of Herr von Eitelberger.

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In the negotiations leading up to the Pact of London a somewhat illogical division of Dalmatia was adopted, the northern part (about two-thirds of the whole area) being assigned to Italy and one-third remaining unallotted to any Power, but with the understanding that it should constitute the outlet for Serbia (from Traù to Ragusa) and for Montenegro (the Bocche di Cattaro). After the Armistice the part assigned to Italy was occupied by the Italian forces, but the dispute as to its final destination continued for two years. The Yugoslav delegates insisted on the predominantly Slav character of the whole province and demanded that it should be assigned to the Serb-Croat-Slovene State, and in this they enjoyed the unconditional support of President Wilson.¹ During the Italian occupation the Dalmatian Slavs were by no means dissatisfied with Italian rule, which was certainly an improvement on that of Austria, and had it become definite they would probably have ended by developing into good Italian citizens. But the very uncertainty of their future prevented them from committing themselves in favour of Italy, lest they should be made to pay for it afterwards. The Italian element was of course only too delighted to be freed from the yoke of Austrian bureaucracy and Slav politicians. From Spalato alone, which was outside the Italian zone and ruled by Yugoslavia, supported by the guns of United States war-ships, a petition signed by 7,000 persons demanding annexation to Italy was sent to the Peace Conference.²

Unfortunately public opinion in Italy herself was divided on the question of Dalmatia, and a section of it was opposed to annexation; military opinion was on the whole of this way of thinking, as the defence of the

¹ It is said that he was influenced in this policy by his wife's physician, Dr. Biankini, brother of one of the Croat leaders in Dalmatia.

² A. D'Alia, *La Dalmazia*, p. 209.

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province would have required a large armed force cut off from the rest of Italy but naval opinion advocated the annexation on account of the many well-sheltered harbours existing all down the coast, protected by innumerable islands, any one of which would become a formidable naval base threatening the exposed and defenceless Italian coast. Among the people at large the question was not considered exclusively on its own merits, and there was even a group of politicians and journalists who assumed the advocacy of the Slav point of view, not on account of the difficulties which the annexation might involve, nor even from a conviction that Yugoslavia had a moral and ethnic right to Dalmatia, but as a useful argument in the game of internal political intrigue. Italy did not therefore face her opponents with a united front, and the Slav delegates could always base their demands on the pronouncements of Italian *rinunciatori*.

As we have seen, Italy ended by waiving the rights conferred on her by the Pact of London over Northern Dalmatia, except for Zara and a tiny adjacent district. She secured certain guarantees for the maintenance of the Italian character of the minorities in the rest of the province, including the right of those Italians to opt for Italian citizenship without being obliged to leave the country, in exchange for similar provisions in favour of the Slavs in Fiume. Since the conclusion of these agreements the Dalmatian question has assumed a different aspect. It is no longer a struggle between the Italian and Slav elements in the province, but one between the Slav population of Dalmatia and the Belgrade Government. The Dalmatian Slavs consider themselves culturally far superior to the semi-Oriental Serbs, dominating the whole Kingdom, which they undoubtedly are, thanks to their Italian and Western traditions, and do not relish being ruled by a Balkan

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administration. The quarrel has at times assumed a tragic aspect, and may at any moment burst out into a flame of revolt. The Italians of Dalmatia take no part in the dispute, but smile sardonically and wait.



CHAPTER X

ITALY AND THE TURKISH QUESTION

WE have seen in a previous chapter how close the relations between Italy and the Levant had been in the past and how even the Turkish conquest of Constantinople did not interrupt them. The contact between the various States of Italy and the Turkish Empire had been sometimes peaceful and friendly and sometimes warlike, the peaceful periods of commercial intercourse being far longer. On one occasion Italy, or rather the Kingdom of Sardinia, had co-operated with Great Britain and France to prevent the complete disruption of the Ottoman Empire, whose existence she regarded as necessary for the balance of power in Europe, although there were of course other reasons for Sardinian intervention in the Crimean War.

All over the Turkish dominions, actual and past, we come upon visible traces of bygone Italy—Roman, Venetian, Genoese monuments, Italian customs and traditions and objects of common use, and even Italian expressions which have peretrated into the various local languages and are used indifferently by Turks, Greeks and Slavs. In every important Turkish or ex-Turkish seaport and in some of the chief cities of the interior there are Italian communities large or small, with their schools, their churches, their institutions and associations. Many of these Italian citizens, settled in the Levant for several generations, do not even speak Italian, but they are none the less deeply

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attached to their Italian nationality, while on the other hand the Italian language is still widely spoken even by people who have no Italian blood or connexions. Until the first half of the nineteenth century Italian was indeed the medium of intercourse between the Turks and the Western World, and diplomatic correspondence and treaties between Turkey and the European Powers were often drafted in Italian. In the nineteenth century French began to supplant Italian as the diplomatic language in Turkey, and all Turks aspiring to be regarded as men of education learned French rather than Italian. But Italian continued to be widely used, and in every office, shop or place of business persons speaking Italian were always found, especially along the coast. The Austrian Lloyd, although it was an active instrument of Austrian political and economic penetration, helped to propagate and maintain the Italian language and customs in the Levant, as practically all its officers and crews were Italian-speaking subjects of the Monarchy.

Italians usually got on very well with the Turks, and even the Libyan War did not leave bitter memories behind it. Italians had contributed not a little to the development and progress of Turkey, and would have done far more had it not been for the general obstacles to all progress inherent in the Oriental mentality and above all in the old Turkish methods of administration. In Italy it was always hoped that sooner or later the time would come when her sons might play a more important part in developing the resources of the Turkish lands, although no definite schemes had been prepared. Although during the Libyan War all Italian citizens were expelled from Turkey, as soon as peace was concluded they were allowed to return, but, owing to the outbreak of the Balkan War and the difficult economic conditions of the Empire, many of

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these exiles did not in fact return and the reconstituted Italian communities in Turkey were less numerous than they had been in the past.

The World War, and especially the intervention of Turkey on the side of the Central Powers, was to effect a profound transformation in the relations of all the Great Powers with Turkey, and it seemed that the fate of the Ottoman Empire was at last sealed. In the event of an Entente victory its territories seemed inevitably destined to be partitioned among the Allies, and in that of a victory for the Central Powers Turkey would only have survived as a vassal of Germany.

There was, however, at first no established plan for the partition of Turkey, and of all the Allies Russia alone had a clearly-thought-out policy towards Turkey from the first. It was the old traditional policy of Russia—the annexation of Constantinople and of vast territories in Asia Minor. Great Britain and France had only vague expansionist tendencies, and with regard to Italy those two Powers and Russia by the terms of the Pact of London 'recognized as an axiom the fact that Italy is interested in the maintenance of political equilibrium in the Mediterranean, viz. in that area which borders on the Adalia zone where Italy has already acquired special rights and interests laid down by the Italo-British convention'.¹ The zone to be assigned to Italy was to be 'fixed at the proper time in harmony with the vital interests of France and Great Britain. Likewise Italian interests must be held in due consideration in the case that the Powers should maintain, for a further period, the inviolability of Asiatic Turkey, and only proceed to a delimitation among themselves of spheres of influence'.² It was

¹ This convention concerned Italy's economic activities in the Adalia zone.

² Art. 7 of the Pact.

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or these conditions that Italy had adhered to the previous agreement of March 4, 1915, whereby Great Britain and France had accepted Russia's demands concerning Turkey. When this agreement became known it caused considerable alarm in the Balkan States, who preferred Russia as a distant protector and big brother rather than as a near and not too dear neighbour. Moreover, two of them—Bulgaria and Greece—aspired to seize yet further portions of Turkish territory for themselves, and Greece actually laid claim to Constantinople as the future capital of a revived Byzantine Empire.

It was not until May, 1916, that an even partial partition of Asiatic Turkey was decided on. France, Great Britain and Russia then concluded an agreement providing for the division of Anatolia into a Russian area (Constantinople and Eastern Anatolia), British and French zones of occupation or at least of influence, and a group of independent Arab States, while the rest of Ottoman territory remained unassigned. This agreement was confirmed by another one concluded on March 6, 1917.

The Allied Italian Government had not been informed of either of these two agreements, although they undoubtedly encroached on the provisions of the Pact of London, and when Baron Sonnino got wind of them he was naturally not a little irritated at what he regarded as the bad faith of the statesmen at the head of the Allied Governments. If Anatolia was to be partitioned, the question was more important for Italy, who had a large and rapidly increasing population and possessed only the scantiest colonial dominions, than for those Powers who already owned vast and to a large extent undeveloped possessions with unlimited room for the expansion of their surplus population. Consequently Italy demanded that in any future distribution of

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colonial territories she should have her fair share. In this particular case Italy would have preferred to see the integrity of the Ottoman Empire maintained and merely to participate in its development. But now that that Empire was in the ranks of her enemies and its partition envisaged, Italy did not intend to be left out of any arrangement concerning it.

Baron Sonnino put these considerations before the Allied statesmen who could not fail to recognize their cogency, and a new meeting was held at St. Jean de Maurienne on April 19 and 20, 1917, between himself, Mr. Lloyd George and M. Briand. The previous agreements were then communicated to the Italian Minister and a new one concluded whereby the vilayet of Smyrna and the sanjak of Adalia were explicitly and definitely assigned to Italy. Russia was unrepresented at St. Jean de Maurienne, and a clause was inserted in the agreement providing that its execution was conditional on Russia's approval, as she was supposed to be still interested in the partition of Turkey and indeed one of the chief participants in the future Ottoman inheritance. But Russia was then in the throes of a revolution that was to bring about her disappearance as an ally and indeed as a civilized Power, and she was unable either to give her consent or refuse it, either then or afterwards.

The collapse of Russia profoundly altered the general economy of the Entente, and the parts of Turkey previously assigned to her remained without destination, practically in the condition of *res nullius*. The question of Constantinople was thus reopened, as it was impossible to hand over that all-important position to any one of the three Great Powers of the Entente without arousing the bitter jealousy of the others, and the same remark would apply in case the city were assigned to any one of the Balkan Powers. Subse-

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quently, the United States having joined the Entente, it was proposed to entrust Constantinople to them, but the Washington Government refused the dangerous gift. Another proposal was that, except as regards the Arab provinces, the partition of Turkey should be abandoned and Constantinople and Anatolia left to the Turks. It was Mr. Lloyd George who at one moment supported this view. In a speech to the Trade Union delegates delivered on January 5, 1918, he declared: 'While we do not challenge the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire in the homelands of the Turkish race, with its capital at Constantinople, the non-Turkish territories of that Empire have a right to the recognition of their respective national conditions.' There could be no doubt as to the meaning of these words.

Another factor now appeared on the scene—the Greeks. The intervention of Greece in the War on the side of the Allies had been urgently demanded by the French and British Governments, especially by the former, because more effectives were required for the Macedonian expeditionary force to which neither France nor Great Britain wished to send any reinforcements from the Allied fronts in France. The mass of the Greek people were averse to intervention on either side, and King Constantine strenuously supported neutrality and was indeed suspected in certain Allied circles of pro-German sympathies. Be that as it may, many of the Greek generals and politicians were avowed supporters of the Central Powers, largely because they were convinced that the latter were going to win. But M. Venizelos, backed by the diplomacy and the armed forces of France and Great Britain, succeeded in getting King Constantine deposed and in dragging Greece, *nolens volens*, into the War. General Sarrail, Commander-in-Chief of the Allied Armies in

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the Orient, and the French Government, both under strongly Radical and Leftward influences, were for the abolition of the Monarchy outright and the setting up of a Republic with Venizelos as President. But Great Britain and Italy opposed this policy, as they saw no reason why two Monarchical countries should force a Republic on a people who had as yet expressed no wish for one; it was finally agreed that King Constantine should be deposed and that his second son, Prince Alexander, should mount the throne in his place and summon M. Venizelos to assume the Premiership. What promises Venizelos secured from France and Great Britain as the price of Greek military assistance in Macedonia we do not know, but he undoubtedly gave the Greek people to understand that he had obtained vast territorial concessions for them. Italy was the one Allied Power who realized the danger which the satisfaction of the extreme Greek ambitions would involve, not merely for Italian interests in the Levant, but for the general peaceful settlement of the Eastern problem. She therefore kept aloof from the policy of bullying Greece into intervention which would have to be paid for sooner or later.

Greek intervention did prove useful to the Allies, for the Greek army, although untrained, disorganized and torn by political factions and consequently of small value as a whole, was able to supply a certain amount of untrained levies and some of its units fought very gallantly.¹ But the same results might have been obtained by the sending of a much smaller number of French, British or Italian troops already trained and accustomed to modern warfare.

The Allied victory in the Balkans and the surrender of Bulgaria on September 29, 1918, the British

¹ This applies not only to the three volunteer divisions of Venizelos' army, but also to some of the units of the regular army.

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victories in Palestine, combined with the German and Austrian defeats in France and Italy, brought about the Turkish surrender at Mudros on October 31. By the terms of the Armistice the Turks were to evacuate not only the territories occupied beyond their own frontiers in Persia and Transcaucasia, but also the outlying portions of their own Empire inhabited by non-Turkish peoples—Arabia, Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia. The Turkish garrisons there were to surrender to the Allies, and those in Cilicia to be reduced to the minimum necessary for the maintenance of order. The Allies were entitled to occupy the Straits at once, as well as any other strategic positions in other parts of Turkey, if their security should be menaced (Art. 7), and also a part of the 'Armenian vilayets' if disorders should occur in them (Art. 24), but no mention was made of Smyrna or Thrace. The Convention left the Turkish State shorn of its outlying territories; but those in which the majority of the population was Turkish remained directly under Turkish rule, and there was apparently no question of occupying them. Although the arrangement was of a purely military and temporary character, the Turks considered that it conferred on them certain definite if negative rights which would be embodied in the future peace treaty as a matter of course, i.e. they considered that the territories the occupation of which was not provided for would be left to them definitely.

On November 12, 1918, the Allied fleets entered the Dardanelles, and the following day anchored in the Bosphorus off Constantinople. Immediately afterwards a mixed Allied military force, commanded by Lieut.-General Sir Henry Wilson, occupied both shores of the Straits and eventually the city itself. General Sir George Milne, Commander-in-Chief of the British Salonica force, transferred his headquarters from

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Salonica to Constantinople,¹ and General Franchet d'Esperey, commanding all the Allied Armies in the Orient, followed suit in February, 1919. As a part of General Milne's troops in Asia were not under General Franchet d'Esperey's orders, a dual control was established not conducive to harmonious inter-Allied relations or efficient and united action. Besides the capital, various other points in Eastern Thrace and Anatolia on the coast or along the railways were occupied by Allied detachments. The French installed themselves in Cilicia. The avowed objects of these occupations were the enforcement of the Armistice conditions, the maintenance of communications, and to some extent the protection of Christian minorities.

The Turks were utterly broken and demoralized by the terrible hardships of the War, the strain of which had proved exhausting beyond even their astonishing powers of endurance, and at the time of the Armistice the Turkish forces were in a state of complete disintegration. Besides the various army corps which had surrendered to General Allenby, the deserters numbered hundreds of thousands; in many parts of the country the soldiers and people were literally starving, and the influenza epidemic had wrought fearful havoc. No opposition to the enforcement of the Armistice conditions appeared, therefore, possible. Indeed the people as a whole, who had no grievance against the Allies, were only too relieved that the War was over, and had no wish to face further trouble. The forts were dismantled, the arms were handed in slowly but without wilful obstruction, and demobilization was begun. The Turkish army was to be reduced to 50,000 men, with 24 guns to each army corps, but the effectives actually fell below that figure owing to the number of deserters. The Allies to their credit did

¹ This force now became the 'Army of the Black Sea'.

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much to relieve the poorer part of the population and proceeded to clean up Constantinople and improve health conditions and communications. The chief hardship, apart from the humiliation of defeat felt by the more intelligent Turks, was the uncertainty as to the future destiny of the country.

In Paris the chiefs of the Allied Governments were at first too busy with the various urgent European problems to think out a reasonable Eastern policy. There was an undercurrent of conflict between the Powers anxious to acquire political and commercial influence in Turkey, and a tendency became manifest in certain British circles to establish a sort of protectorate over the whole of Anatolia and make of it a greater Egypt. France aspired to the definite possession of Cilicia, while Italy claimed the protectorate over the Smyrna-Adalia area in virtue of the St. Jean de Maurienne agreement. But early in 1919 the British and French Governments informed that of Italy that, as Russia's consent had not been given, they considered themselves no longer bound by that obligation.

Italian public opinion and Government circles had begun, immediately after the Armistice, to doubt the wisdom of a complete partition of Turkey, as it was felt that a Turkish national revival was still possible and in some ways even desirable to restore the balance in the Near East. The Italian High Commissioner in Constantinople (Count Sforza) gave the Turks a certain moral support in their opposition to the total loss of their independence, and at that time the Italians were more popular than any of the Allied Powers. Most Italians, however, were anxious to establish economic influence in the Smyrna-Adalia area, where there was room for a great deal of development. They were therefore prepared to submit to the breach of promise

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on the part of their Allies, provided the disputed territory were left under the rule of the Turks, with whom an understanding for economic activities was always possible.

The Turks themselves were becoming daily more anxious and alarmed over the large crop of rumours and plans for a settlement of a nature profoundly unsatisfactory to them which were spreading about. Whereas at first there was very little hostility on their part towards the Allies in general, a party now began to be formed with a more definitely anti-Entente programme. The British in particular were accused of exercising undue influence on the Sultan, through statesmen like the Grand Vizir Damad Ferid Pasha and Ali Kemal Bey, in order to reduce the country to a state of complete subjection. That that was at one time actually the intention of Mr. Lloyd George appears practically certain. But the difficulty was that neither Great Britain nor any other of the victorious Powers had sufficient troops available for garrisoning so vast an area in the face of a possibly hostile population, even if public opinion at home had been prepared to accept the idea of a new campaign only a few months after the longed-for Armistice had been concluded. There were indeed insistent demands for demobilization in every country, and the strength of many British battalions in Turkey was reduced to little more than a hundred men, and no more reinforcements were being sent out to fill up the gaps. It was this situation perhaps which induced the British Prime Minister to contemplate the possibility of policing Anatolia for Great Britain with Greek troops. The notion of ruling by means of the picturesquely clad Evzones may have appealed to the poetic imagination of the Welsh mountaineer. It is true that he was a signatory to the document promising Smyrna to Italy; but that

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was no obstacle, as there was the convenient legal quibble about Russian consent, even though that consent was lacking not because Russia had refused it, but because there was no longer any Russia to give it, and the condition had been inserted merely because at the time Russia herself was believed to be still a claimant to a large portion of Turkish territory. In any case her consent was not deemed necessary for the Anatolian policy subsequently adopted. Then there was President Wilson, on whom one could always rely for support of an anti-Italian policy. Moreover, both Lloyd George and Clemenceau disliked the notion that Italy might acquire influence and perhaps territory in the Near East and were determined to prevent it at all costs, even at that of their own good name and of that of their respective nations and peoples, although it should always be remembered that the latter were only to a small extent responsible.

But these policies and plans were still somewhat nebulous, and the Elder Statesmen were not yet quite sure as to what they really intended to do. Since the collapse of Russia the only Power which had a definite Turkish policy was Greece, or rather M. Venizelos. On December 30, 1918, he presented a memorandum to the Peace Conference setting forth his country's claims, which he based on the principle of nationality, trying to prove by statistics that the territories to which Greece aspired were predominantly Greek in population. He also appealed to the Fourteen Points and asserted Greece's superior civilization and historic mission. On these grounds he demanded Constantinople, all Thrace, the sanjaks of Smyrna and Balikesir, Rhodes and the Dodecanese. He expressed himself willing to renounce Constantinople on the grounds of its great international importance, but insisted on the other claims. Simultaneously he

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organized an active and able propaganda throughout the Allied countries, especially in Great Britain and the United States, for the furtherance of his policy, and tried to make out that the Greek inhabitants of Anatolia were in danger of massacre.¹

To the Smyrna area Venize'os attached particular importance and while its definite destiny was still uncertain, he made desperate efforts to secure from the Conference a mandate to occupy it with Greek troops, as a first step towards annexation. What finally decided the Peace Conference to confer a military mandate for Smyrna on Greece is not yet clear. The Italian delegation was hostile to this decision, regarding it as a breach of faith. The British and French officers and diplomats on the spot, as well as their Italian colleagues, who had real knowledge of Eastern affairs based on experience, likewise opposed it, as they knew that a Greek occupation would arouse the most violent resentment on the part of the Turks and that the Greeks did not possess the self-control and military and administrative ability and experience to carry out such action peacefully and successfully. But Greek propaganda was beginning to tell, and when the Italian delegation withdrew after the Fiume incident on April 23, 1919, Venizelos redoubled his efforts, and the final decision was taken at the beginning of May. When the Italian delegation returned it found the matter settled. On May 14, 1919, the Allied forces took possession of the forts of Smyrna, and on the 15th the Greek troops were authorized to land in execution of Article 7 of the Armistice.

From the very first the Greeks proved unable to carry out the impossible task assigned to them, and their occupation of Western Anatolia produced the

¹ The documents on which this last belief was based were proved by the Inter-Allied Smyrna Commission to be forgeries.

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results which all the experts had foreseen. The Turks, while not loving the Great Powers, were ready to admit their higher civilization and to recognize them as victors in the World War. But they refused to regard the Greeks in the same light, and their hatred of the erstwhile *rayah* was intensified by the manner in which the Greek army attempted to govern the country and crush out all resistance on the part of the Moslem inhabitants.

When it was certain that the Greek troops were to be entrusted with the occupation of the Smyrna area, Italy decided to effect a landing at Adalia, to safeguard the economic interests which she had created there prior to the War. A small detachment of seamen, afterwards followed by Bersaglieri, occupied Adalia and its surroundings, and later the occupation was extended to Scalanova, Makri and other points on the southern and south-western coast of Anatolia or in the immediate hinterland. It was eventually agreed that the river Meander should be the dividing line between the Italian and the Greek zones of military occupation. In addition to the points where Italian garrisons were established, Italian Red Cross units were sent farther inland and did admirable relief work for the population. The Italian infantry battalion stationed at Konia, under the British G.H.Q. at Constantinople, formed part of the forces echeloned along the railways of Anatolia to guard the lines of communication, and had nothing to do with Italian political action in the Near East.

The Italian occupation of South-Western Anatolia was regarded with disfavour in certain French and British political circles (as distinguished from military spheres), where all the favours were reserved for the Hellenic 'Crusaders', while the Greeks themselves were extremely annoyed at it, as they considered the

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whole of Anatolia, and not merely the comparatively limited zone assigned to them as destined to come under their own protectorate, and looked upon the Italians as 'gate-crashers'. But the presence of Italian troops was very welcome to the Turkish inhabitants, and many of those who in the Greek occupied area were subject to severe persecutions at the hands of the Greek troops and above all of the local Greek inhabitants, took refuge in the Italian zone. Most Turks at that time were reconciled to the idea of seeing their country or at least a part of it placed under the tutelage of one or more of the Great Powers, from whom they knew they could expect justice and efficient administration. But they were determined to resist Greek domination to the bitter end.

It was indeed the Greek occupation which brought about the rise of a new Nationalist movement among the Turks and a revival of Turkish patriotic sentiment; under the leadership of a vigorous and capable man, with a fine military record during the War, Mustafa Kemal Pasha, the movement rapidly assumed vast proportions and attracted the great bulk of the people, including the immense majority of the educated classes. The Greeks thus found themselves involved not merely in a 'colonial' campaign against Zeibeks and rebel bands, but in a regular war against a newly formed army which every day became more numerous, better armed and more efficient. At the same time the Turkish Nationalist movement soon evolved from an exasperated outbreak against the domination of the despised and hitherto down-trodden Greeks into a widespread political movement aspiring to the liberation of Turkey from every form of foreign bondage and its creation into a free modern nation on a footing of equality with the other Powers of the world.

The Sultan's Government, much as it resented the

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handing over of the Smyrna zone to the Greeks, regarded Mustafa Kemal as a rebel against legitimate authority, and consequently disowned him and deprived him of his rank and honours. But while he had now no official position, he became the dominant influence throughout Asia Minor except in those parts which were actually occupied by foreign troops, and although *valis* and other officials appointed by the Constantinople Government still nominally ruled, they either had no authority at all or obeyed the orders of the all-powerful Mustafa Kemal.

Many of the most intelligent and patriotic men in Turkey rallied to Mustafa Kemal's standard, and the Grand National Assembly at Angora came into being and was in effect the true Parliament of Turkey.

Soon after the Greek landing the Constantinople Government lodged a protest with the Peace Conference against the conduct of the Greek troops; an inter-Allied commission of inquiry was set up and conducted a very careful investigation into the events connected with the landing of the Greek troops and their occupation of the interior. Its unanimous conclusions were decidedly unfavourable to the Greek point of view; the commission asserted that the annexation of the Smyrna area to Greece would be contrary to the principle of nationality as 'in the occupied area, outside the towns of Smyrna and Aivali, the predominance of the Turkish element over the Greek is incontestable. It therefore proposed the withdrawal of the Greek troops and their replacement by Allied contingents, or if, to save the Greeks' *amour propre*, it was desired to leave some Greek troops in the country, they should be so distributed as not to come into contact with the Nationalists. This report was never published and its proposals were not acted upon. Consequently the war went on with its tale of massacre, destruction and ruin.

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In April, 1920, the Supreme Council met at San Remo to prepare the Turkish Treaty. It was remarkable that at that conference the military and naval experts showed a much truer understanding of the Near Eastern situation than the politicians; this has been also brought out by the memoirs of the late Sir Henry Wilson. While the politicians were spell-bound by the eloquence of M. Venizelos, Marshal Foch, Lord Beatty, Sir Henry Wilson and Marshal Badoglio failed to be convinced, and expressed their disapproval on technical grounds of the pro-Greek and pro-Armenian solutions proposed by Messrs. Lloyd George and Briand and accepted by Sig. Nitti. Marshal Foch declared that twenty-seven divisions would be necessary to enforce the treaty, but added that his British and Italian colleagues considered the figure too low. To this M. Venizelos replied that he could supply all the troops required; that was enough for the Prime Ministers, and the agreement was concluded. The San Remo decisions were subsequently embodied in the Treaty of Sèvres, whereby a territory roughly corresponding to the Greek occupied zone (except for Aic'in and some other points) was assigned to Greece under some shadowy limitations in favour of Turkish sovereignty, and an undelimited Armenian State was created.¹ By the so-called 'Tripartite Agreement' the other parts of Turkey were divided into British, French and Italian zones of 'economic priority', but no one except M. Venizelos and perhaps Mr. Lloyd George believed that the Treaty would ever be executed.

At the Spa Conference, as the Kemalists refused to accept the Sèvres Treaty, the Greek army received the mandate to carry it out; operations on a larger scale

¹ The frontiers of the Armenian State were afterwards fixed by President Wilson, but the State itself never materialized.

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than before began in the summer of 1920, and almost the whole of the Greek army concentrated in Anatolia. In November of that year an unexpected event occurred in Greece. At the general elections held after the death of King Alexander, the Venizelist Government was defeated and forced to resign, and King Constantine, who had been deposed by the Allied Powers in the summer of 1917, was called back to Athens by popular acclamation and ascended the throne once more. France now withdrew all support of Greek policy, and indeed came to an agreement with the Kemalist Government. Italy, who had always sympathized with the Turkish Nationalist cause, saw no reason to alter her policy, and she concluded an agreement with the Kemalist Government, in which she undertook to use her influence in favour of a Greek withdrawal from Anatolia. Mr. Lloyd George alone continued to support Greek ambitions, and encouraged the new Athens Government to carry on the Anatolian campaign.

But it was soon evident that Greece was in no position to continue the desperate struggle indefinitely, and that the war was a menace to the peace of the world. An attempt at mediation by the Great Powers was made, and Greek and Turkish delegates were invited to the meeting of the Supreme Council held in London in February, 1921. The Turkish delegates comprised representatives of both the Constantinople and the Angora Governments, and they ended by acting together and presenting joint demands. But the attempted mediation came to nothing and fighting was resumed.

In the meanwhile the British had withdrawn their forces scattered about Anatolia and along the railway lines, and had actually handed over the arms and munition dumps concentrated in certain points accord-

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ing to the provisions of the Mudros Armistice into the 'safe-keeping' of the Kemalists. The French not only evacuated Cilicia, which they had at first tried to hold with Armenian levies in French uniforms, but showed themselves extremely friendly to the Turkish Nationalists, and made out that it was only the perfidious British who had supported the Greek invasion. The Italians withdrew their garrisons from South-Western Anatolia, leaving only a few Red Cross units behind, until these too were withdrawn. The ring was thus kept for the two antagonists—the Turkish Nationalists and the Greeks—to fight out their desperate struggle to the bitter end. The inter-Allied army of occupation in the Constantinople area, under British command, still remained, holding both shores of the Bosphorus and the Dardanelles, while the Greeks continued to occupy Eastern Thrace, according to the terms of the Treaty of Sèvres.

In the summer of 1922 there seemed a reasonable prospect of a peaceful solution. The Greeks, after three years of fierce fighting, in which they had gained several victories and suffered not a few defeats, were no nearer to the definite establishment of their authority in Anatolia, and their effort was visibly slackening. They themselves at last realized that, having lost the sympathies and support of Europe, they could not hope to hold the country in the face of an enemy who every day grew stronger, and were resigned to the idea of evacuation. The Turks asked for nothing better than a peaceful Greek evacuation of Anatolia, for although they felt confident that they could defeat the Greek army and drive it into the sea, there was always the uncertainty of the stricken field and the fear that if the war dragged on too long the Great Powers might intervene and impose a settlement unsatisfactory to Turkey. These views were brought to the attention of Senator

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Schanzer, then Italian Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Facta Cabinet, and being very anxious to see peace re-established, he communicated them to Mr. Lloyd George, suggesting the advisability of Allied mediation in favour of a peaceful withdrawal of the Greeks by agreement with the Turks. Mr. Winston Churchill, in the *Aftermath*, has given a vivid picture of the deplorable conditions of the Greek army in Anatolia at that time, when, abandoned without supplies of reinforcements from home, it fought bravely a hopeless battle, well knowing that evacuation was inevitable.

But the British Prime Minister, who had refused to receive Fethi Bey, the delegate of the Angora Government, which was now the only effective Government in Turkey, when he came to London with conciliatory proposals, would not listen to Sig. Schanzer and expressed the conviction that the Greek troops were far superior to the Turks and quite capable of holding their own. He also expressed his cordial sympathy and confidence in the Greeks, and in a speech delivered on August 4, 1922, he asserted that but for the Allied occupation of Constantinople the Greek army could have seized even that city without difficulty, and that no peace offers or proposals for a Greek evacuation could be considered unless the safety of the Christians of Asia Minor were guaranteed; those guarantees, he added, could not be based on the word of the Angora Government, which was worthless. *The Times*, in commenting on this speech (August 5), said: 'It is deeply to be regretted that the Prime Minister should have made at this moment a speech that obscures even those faint proposals of peace on which faint hopes were placed.'

When Mr. Lloyd George's speech was read by the Turks it was naturally interpreted by them as a prelude to British intervention on behalf of the Greeks, and

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they therefore deemed it imperative to present Europe with a *fait accompli*. On August 26 they launched a general attack on the Greek army, inflicted a smashing defeat on it, drove it back in wild confusion and forced it to evacuate Asia Minor. The Turks entered Smyrna on September 9, 1922, and eventually, after the best part of the city had been destroyed by fire and many Greeks and Armenians slaughtered or drowned, the whole of the Greek and Armenian population was forced to follow the Hellenic army to Greece. This disaster, involving the loss of scores of thousands of lives of both soldiers and civilians on both sides and the destruction of a vast amount of property, might well have been avoided, but for the obstinacy of the statesmen of some of the Allied Powers who deemed themselves infallible. Italian statesmen of all parties had opposed the disastrous Near Eastern policy of the Allies from the beginning, and are therefore free from all responsibility for its appalling consequences.

After the evacuation of Anatolia by the Greeks and the definite establishment and recognition of the Turkish Nationalist Government, Italy wished to resume normal political and economic relations with Turkey. The new Turkey had every reason to be more grateful to Italy than to any other Western Power, as Italy alone had lent it moral and diplomatic support in its struggle for independence, realizing that a strong and independent Turkey was a more powerful factor of stabilization in the Near East than a Turkey in which the various European Powers were ever competing and intriguing against each other for predominance, or a Turkey in which one or more Great Powers dominated through Greek arms, which would mean prolonged warfare.

But the harm wrought by the disastrous policy adopted has survived the events to which it gave rise

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at the time. That policy has created a new spirit among the Turks, and made of them a people very different from the good-natured, easy-going Oriental race of the past, with whom it was always possible to come to a friendly understanding, provided a little tact and kindness were observed, together with a respect for outward appearances. At the Lausanne Conference the Turks showed clearly that they considered themselves the victors not only of the Greeks, but of the Western Powers in general, and those Powers lent themselves to that belief by giving way to Turkey on almost all points. After browbeating the Turks when they seemed hopelessly defeated and trying to impose on them the one humiliation which they could never accept—domination by or through the Greeks of the richest area of their country—after their victory in the field over the Greek army—they granted them at Lausanne all that they demanded.

This diplomatic victory of the Turks over the West, after their military victory over the Greeks, combined with the memories of the oppression and intrigues of which they had been the victims in the past, made the Turks hostile to any form of intervention or economic activity, however peaceful and innocuous, on the part of any Western Power. Italy had given up all idea of any territorial occupation of Turkey, and even of 'economic priority' or predominance; she was prepared to co-operate with the Turks in the reconstruction of their country after the devastation of the recent war. But in their suspicious attitude towards the whole of the West the Turks were as jealous of Italy as of the Powers who really had tried to encroach on their independence, and while they were rapidly shedding that Moslem religious fanaticism which had made them hate and despise the Giaours in the past, they had become far more intolerant from a Nationalist point of

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view. Their jealousy and suspicion of Italy who alone of the Great Powers had befriended them appears to have been fomented by those whose interest it was to prevent any understanding between Italy and Turkey. Thus during the dispute over the Mosul question rumours were sedulously spread about that Italy was preparing to effect an armed landing in Anatolia. Several of the yellow journals of Great Britain and other countries were enlisted in the campaign, and published lurid accounts of huge Italian military preparations in the Dodecanese for an expeditionary force against Turkey. Even in West End drawing-rooms you were told in whispers that the outbreak of an Italo-Turkish War was a question of days. Of course there was not a fraction of truth in these stories, as the writers who spread them about well knew. But they served their purpose, or rather their purposes, viz. to produce a certain amount of agitation which had its repercussion in the financial world and was productive no doubt of a profitable little flutter, to foment ill feeling between the different Western Powers, all to the advantage of the Bolsheviks and others, and incidentally to make the Turks' flesh creep and induce them to concentrate sundry mobilized army corps on the Western coast and thus make them more amenable to reason elsewhere.

The scare passed away and the Mosul question was settled, the Turks having given way. But it was still very difficult to come to any definite and satisfactory agreement with Turkey. Political relations were correct, but, although Turkey was and is in desperate need of foreign assistance, capital, technical skill, specialized labour, machinery and all kinds of goods which she is totally incapable of producing, she places every obstacle in the way of foreign enterprise. Italy is in a favourable position to supply some of these

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deficiencies, particularly in the matter of skilled engineers and workmen, specialists in land reclamation, anti-malarial action and road-building. But even in these fields Italians are hampered in every way, although perhaps not quite to the same extent as citizens of other nations, by the suspicions and exaggerated Chauvinism of the Turks. Even when the Government is favourably disposed, local officials are ever seeking to *saboter* all foreign activities. Italy's trade with Turkey is larger than that of any other country (exports range about £T. 50,000,000 per annum and imports are about the same). But it ought to be very much larger, and when the Turks overcome their suspicions and adopt a more reasonable attitude towards foreigners in general—and from force of circumstances that day must come soon—Italy will be better able to help than almost any other Great Power, America alone having a greater advantage in the matter of available capital to invest. A Treaty of Friendship and Conciliation has been concluded between Italy and Turkey and a commercial treaty is being negotiated. But to-day no one outside a lunatic asylum would dream of investing money in Turkey, in spite of the vast unexploited riches of the country.

The country presents a desolate picture at this moment. Constantinople, once so brilliant, gay and prosperous, is a dying city, its population declining, its trade diminishing year by year, its few industries dead. Smyrna makes an even worse impression. I well remember it in the summer of 1919, when in spite of the Greek occupation and the stories of fighting and atrocities percolating through from the interior, it appeared full of bustling activity. Along the quays stretched rows of handsome well-built houses belonging to wealthy residents, foreigners or native Greeks; other fine streets lined with good shops ran parallel

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to the quay. In the more distant suburbs were beautiful villas amid charming surroundings, also belonging to rich merchants. The trade of the city was suffering, it is true, because a barrier of steel cut it off from the greater part of its hinterland, and much of the activity of the port was artificial and stimulated only by the necessity of supplying the Greek army. But everyone was convinced that once the fighting ceased and communications with the interior were re-established, and above all if the Greek armies were withdrawn, there would be, with the economic awakening of Asia Minor, which seemed bound to come, a vast development of Smyrna's trade. Instead of which, although the war ended in September, 1922, fire destroyed the city, the native Greek and Armenian communities were forced as a result of the appalling errors of the Western politicians to leave the country together with the Greek armies who should never have been sent there, and the city shows no sign of recovery. The burnt area is just as it was in September, 1922, and all the best part of the city is a blackened ruin. A hotel, a cinema, a few shops have arisen amid the ruins, and that is all. The population appears incredibly shabby and ill-dressed, indeed in rags; the fez, which had a certain charm and lent a note of colour, has been replaced by the leavings of the most inferior hat-shops of Europe, the streets are dirty, ill-paved and neglected, every comfort and convenience is lacking. Anatolia once exported wheat; yet the ship which conveyed me to Smyrna landed a large cargo of flour from Australia to supply local needs. Many of the foreign merchants have left, as there is no business to be done; only a few of the richest and those who have no prospects of doing anything elsewhere, remain on in the hope of better times.

Smyrna has, it is true, become once more the outlet

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for the trade of the interior. But the interior itself is suffering severely and has little trade to give. Large areas of Anatolia are uninhabited, deserted and ruined villages abound, and nowhere has there been any attempt at reconstruction. Reconstruction is indeed impossible without foreign assistance, and foreign assistance will not be forthcoming until the Turks show that they want it and are honestly prepared to welcome it. Such energies as the Turks possess or care to borrow from others are concentrated on the creation of the capital at Angora, where building is really going on, and on the army. Turkey still considers herself more or less in a state of war or at least under a menace of war, no one quite knows from which quarter, and the army has been thoroughly reorganized and made efficient. Something is also being done for education. But all this is a mere trifle compared with the country's needs in every field.

For Greece, on the other hand, the loss of Anatolia has proved a blessing in disguise, very much as the loss of Cuba and the Philippines was for Spain. She has been able to concentrate her efforts and resources on the development of her European territories and on the islands, and with the assistance of the League of Nations she has settled hundreds of thousands of refugees in Macedonia and elsewhere; large areas, formerly swampy and sterile, have been brought under cultivation and rendered highly productive. M. Venizelos has, on his return to office, shown himself possessed of statesmanlike qualities in renouncing all Imperialist ambitions, or rather in turning those ambitions towards internal progress, and while exercising a virtual dictatorship, has reconciled his people to the shattering of their Anatolian dreams and is raising the political and economic status of his country in a very remarkable way.

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Largely owing to the wisdom of Sig. Mussolini and M. Venizelos, Italo-Greek relations have improved to such a point that they could hardly be better. The old causes of rivalry have disappeared and both countries are collaborating peacefully in various fields. Italian capital is seeking investments in Greece, and Italian engineers are contributing to the development of the country's natural resources. Italy now regards Greece as a bulwark of stability in the Balkans and the Near East generally, which she undoubtedly is and will continue to be as long as she follows her present wise policy, and Italy needs peace in the Near East as elsewhere in order to develop her own trade, sell more goods to more prosperous Eastern peoples and buy raw materials which Eastern peasants can only produce if there is peace in their homes. Italo-Greek friendship has recently been cemented by a Treaty of Conciliation and Arbitration.



CHAPTER XI

ALBANIA

ITALY'S interest in Albania is no recent growth. We need not go back to the days of Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, nor to the Roman Empire, nor even to the Venetian settlements from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. But the struggle of Albania under Skanderbeg against the Turkish invaders is not without bearing on the situation of to-day, inasmuch as a number of Skanderbeg's followers settled in Italy after the death of their chief and the conquest of their country by the Turks, and were given lands by the King of Naples out of gratitude for the services previously rendered to him by the 'Athlete of Christendom'. Albanian settlements in Calabria and other parts of Southern Italy and Sicily exist to this day, retaining the language, the customs and traditions and even the Oriental ritual of the Church.¹ Many Italians eminent in politics and other fields, including one Prime Minister, Francesco Crispi, are of Albanian origin. Since the creation of the Kingdom Italy has always followed Albanian affairs with keen interest, and, during the last decades before the War, Albania² had been a field of political, economic and cultural competition between Italy and Austria-Hungary. We

¹ The Albanians of Italy are Catholics and recognize Papal supremacy, but practise the Greek ritual.

² No such country as Albania existed in Turkish administrative geography.

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have only to look at a map to realize the nearness of Albania to the Italian coast and understand the reasons for Italian interest in the country.

Austria-Hungary, with her policy of the *Drang nach Osten*, wished to acquire control over Albania, both to guard the flank of her route of penetration into the Balkans, and eventually to utilize the country as a pistol pointed at the opposite Italian coast. Italy regarded Albania from a more negative point of view, as she merely wished to avoid having a hostile or potentially hostile Power installed on the east coast of the lower Adriatic, only a few hours' steam from her own undefended coast. Had Austria controlled the ports of Albania, as well as those of her own coast, Italy would have been strangled in the Adriatic. Eventually a self-denying agreement was concluded, whereby each Power undertook not to attempt to exercise political control over Albania; but each continued to develop its economic and educational activities in the country. The schools were a field of active competition between the two Powers, but the language in which education was imparted in the Austrian as well as in the Italian schools (the teaching in both cases being in the hands of the religious orders) was Italian. Albanian children in the Austrian schools of Albania were taught to sing Haydn's Imperial anthem *Gott erhalte Gott beschütze* to the words:

Salvi Iddio l'austriaco Regno
Ed il nostro Imperator.

The last word, however, was altered, out of deference for Turkish susceptibility, to *Protettor*.

At the end of the Balkan Wars of 1912-13, the territories which now constitute Albania and until then had been part of the Turkish vilayets of Scutari, Yanina, Kossovo and Monastir, found themselves cut

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off from what remained of the old Ottoman Empire by Serbia, Montenegro and Greece, who wished to partition even those territories among themselves. The Montenegrins had, in fact, already occupied Scutari, the Serbs Durazzo and the Greeks some of the southern districts. But Italy and Austria firmly maintained (for once in agreement) that Albania should be erected into an independent State 'on clearly recognized national lines', and the other Great Powers adhered to this plan. At the London Conference of Ambassadors in the summer of 1913 the Albanian State was created, the other Balkan Powers acquiescing unwillingly.

Many mistakes were made in the creation of this State, of which the first was that it was given an utterly inadequate area, and the second that the ruler selected, Prince William of Wied, although a thorough gentleman, proved unsuited for the difficult task assigned to him. Another was that only a portion of the Albanian people were comprised within the borders of the new State, one-half or nearly one-half of them being handed over to the domination of their hereditary enemies the Serbs, the Greeks and the Montenegrins. The Albanians themselves had only a dim sense of nationality, but a strong race consciousness, and had no wish to be ruled by alien peoples, and would indeed have preferred the inefficient but easy-going Ottoman masters. Serbs and Montenegrins had been forced by the Powers to evacuate the northern districts, and Scutari was temporarily held by an international force. The Greeks had invaded Southern Albania and set up a *soi-disant* independent government in that area styled 'Autonomous Epirus', but supported by Greek regular troops, who laid waste the Argyrocastro province, destroying some 300 villages and slaughtering a large number of the Mohammedan inhabitants. But they

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too were eventually obliged to evacuate the territory they had invaded. The international commission appointed to delimit the frontiers of Albania, as established by the Protocol of Florence, had to suspend its work on account of the outbreak of the World War, and Prince William, who had by that time lost all authority, departed from Albania never to return.¹ The Greeks now reoccupied some of the southern districts, including Korcha, and Italy, who attached especial importance to Valona and was very anxious that it should not fall into the hands of a hostile Power or one who might place it at the disposal of a hostile Power, on account of its dominant position in the Adriatic, decided in the autumn of 1914 to occupy it herself.

On entering the World War on the side of the Entente, Italy insisted that certain clauses concerning Albania be inserted in the Pact of London. Although she still held the view that a strong and independent Albania was the best safeguard for her own interests in the Adriatic, as well as being in harmony with the principle of nationality, she was forced, by the pressure of her prospective Allies, to accept a further curtailment of Albanian territory. Russia, as the protector of the Slav peoples, insisted on the cession of Northern Albania to Serbia and Montenegro, Great Britain and France on that of Southern Albania to Greece. Italy was thus obliged to agree that, if her own aspirations in the Trentino and the Venezia Giulia were satisfied, she would not raise objections to these cessions of Albanian territory if the three Allies demanded them. In that case only a small independent Albanian State in the centre of the country would survive, and would be diplomatically represented by Italy. Otherwise,

¹ He did not leave a bad record, and many Albanians long retained an affection for him as the first ruler of a free Albania.

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i.e. if Italy's aspirations were not fully satisfied, a larger Albanian State would remain, with only an outlet on the sea for Serbia and Montenegro at San Giovanni di Medua, while a strategic point (Valona with the island of Saseno in the Bay of Valona) would be assigned to Italy, with as much of the surrounding territory as was necessary for its defence.

Albania has long exercised a strange and fatal fascination on the peoples of Serbian race, and this fascination, which is not based on reasons of security or ethnic claims, has been the cause of many dissensions between Italy and Serbia. The Serbs have repeatedly attempted to seize parts of Albania. They did so in the first instance, as we have seen, at the end of the Balkan Wars, when they actually occupied Durazzo, and the Montenegrins Scutari, and although both points were afterwards evacuated under the pressure of the Great Powers, they were not forgotten. After the *débâcle* of the Serbian army at the hands of the Austrians, Germans and Bulgars in 1915, the obvious course for the survivors of the catastrophe would have been to retreat southwards into Macedonia and join hands with General Sarrail's force in the Salonica area, as the Allies advised. Instead of this, the Serbs insisted on deviating in a south-westerly direction into Albania, perhaps in the hope of firmly establishing themselves there and immediately securing an outlet on the Adriatic. The result was a ghastly tragedy, and but for the assistance of the Italian army and navy and the Italian medical services, the remnants of the Serb army would have been annihilated. For this the Serbs, beginning with the King, expressed warm gratitude at the time, but after the War they appear to have forgotten what they owed to the Italians.

During the latter part of the War Southern Albania

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was held by the Italians and the North by the Austrians, while the district of Korcha was erected by the French *Armée d'Orient* into an *opéra-bouffe* republic under French military tutelage, because the Greeks laid claim to it, and the French, although sympathizing with Greek aspirations, did not like to show it too openly.

On June 3, 1917, General Ferrero, Commander-in-Chief of the Italian expeditionary forces in Albania, issued a proclamation from Argyrocastro to the effect that Italy wished to see the whole of Albania independent under Italian protection. At the end of the War Italian troops occupied the whole of Albania as delimited by the Florence Protocol,¹ except for the town of Scutari, which was occupied by an inter-Allied force under the French General de Fourtou. The districts to the north-east and east, although inhabited by an almost exclusively Albanian population, were, after a temporary French occupation, handed over to the Serbs who had held them before the War. General Franchet d'Esperey, out of pro-Serb sympathies, allowed them to occupy various other districts within the boundaries of the Albanian State, including a large area in the Drin valley west and north-west of Dibra.

During the war-time occupation of Southern Albania the Italians had gained considerable popularity in the country, as they had undoubtedly saved a large part of the population from death by starvation, had carried out vast public works (especially roads), and many of the officers and officials, some of them of Albanian origin, had shown a keen and benevolent interest in the welfare of the country and people. But later the successive Italian Ministries had lost interest in Albania, and most of the best men were withdrawn

¹ This, as we have seen, by no means corresponded to ethnical Albania.

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and replaced by officers who cared nothing for the country and merely regarded it as an unpleasant place of residence, and consequently proved much less popular.

In view of the renewed demands for a partition of Albania advanced at the Peace Conference, the Albanian delegation presented a Note on April 14, 1919, declaring that Albania was ready to accept the friendly assistance of a Great Power for a definite period of time, on the condition that the sovereignty and independence of the State were recognized and that systematic and organized foreign colonization excluded. During the negotiations Italy reasserted her original view as to the desirability of granting full freedom and territorial integrity to Albania. But again she found herself up against the pressing demands of Yugoslavia (who had now absorbed Montenegro and taken over the latter's claims as well as those of Serbia) and of Greece, supported by the other Great Powers. Great Britain, or rather Mr. Lloyd George, had assumed the protection of Greek interests, and supported even the extreme claims of M. Venizelos, while France and the United States, or rather M. Clemenceau and President Wilson, were the paladins of Yugoslavia. Italy was consequently forced to give way on the Albanian question as on many others, and in order to safeguard what remained of her own rights in the Adriatic, concluded the Tittoni-Venizelos agreement of July 29, 1919. She undertook to allow Greece to gain possession of Southern Albania, while Greece was to reimburse her for public works of a permanent nature carried out during and after the War, and to lease her the port of Santi Quaranta for fifty years, to support Italy's claim for a mandate over the rest of Albania, to recognize Italian sovereignty over Valona and its immediate hinterland,



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and to agree to the neutralization of the Corfu channel.¹ Archbishop Bumci, the president of the Albanian delegation, as soon as he heard of the agreement, strongly protested against this menaced partition of his country.

At a meeting of the Peace Conference on January 13, 1920, it was agreed that Italy should retain Valona and be invested with a mandate over the small central Albanian State, the north to be handed over to Yugoslavia and the south to Greece, according to the previous Convention of July 29, 1919. All this made the Albanians ever more suspicious of Italian policy, as they did not realize how much it was the result of irresistible outside pressure ever since the Pact of London, and they were determined to try to secure their independence and avoid any further partition or reduction of their own already excessively restricted territory. From January 21 to February 9, 1920, an Albanian National Assembly sat at Lushnja, where a new form and constitution was given to the State. The Italian forces in Albania had been considerably reduced, and an insurrection against them broke out in the early summer with the object of driving them from the country. Some of the outlying posts were captured, but the Valona garrison held out and repelled all attacks. A mutiny of one of the regiments at Ancona, destined for Albania, promoted by the local anarchists, although rapidly quelled, so alarmed the pusillanimous War Minister Bonomi and the still more timid Premier Giolitti, that the immediate evacuation of Albania was decided on, with the exception of the rocky islet of Saseno dominating Valona Bay. Italy afterwards denounced the Tittoni-Venizelos agreement for reasons set forth elsewhere,

¹ The clauses concerning Anatolia and the Ægean islands in the same agreement are dealt with elsewhere.

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and as in the meanwhile there was no longer any question of a Greek occupation of Southern Albania, Italy had no interest in holding Valona and its hinterland. The policy of evacuation was in itself a sound one, and indeed Marshal Cadorna had from the first opposed the occupation even during the World War, recommending that only Saseno be retained. But no more unfavourable moment for evacuation could have been chosen, as the action of the Government had all the appearance of giving way to an unimportant native rising and to the equally unimportant Ancona mutiny, and wrought serious prejudice to Italian prestige not only in Albania, but throughout the Near East and even elsewhere. Nevertheless a treaty with Albania was concluded on August 2, 1920, by the terms of which Italy agreed to evacuate the whole of Albanian territory except Saseno. From that time onward Italian policy in Albania underwent a decided change for the better, and Italy resumed the rôle of friendly guardian of the independence of the little country.

That Albania needed some sort of outside aid was obvious. Her frontiers were still undelimited, the Yugoslavs in the north and north-east were still aspiring to encroach on her already too exiguous territory; while the Greeks, although they had abandoned their aspirations to the whole of the southern area, still claimed many points along the southern frontier and the kaza of Korcha. A commission was appointed by the Conference of Ambassadors to delimit such parts of the frontier as were still in dispute.

At the first Assembly of the League of Nations Albania applied for membership, and in spite of the opposition of Yugoslavia and Greece, and to some extent of France, the application, with the support of

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Italy, was granted (December, 1920). Her disputes with Yugoslavia and Greece continued to remain acute, and in June, 1921, she appealed to the Council of the League for their settlement. The Council decided that as the Albanian question was already under discussion before the Conference of Ambassadors, it was not competent to intervene, and it limited itself to urging on the three parties concerned to abstain from any act calculated to disturb the peace while waiting for the Ambassadors' decision. The Albanian delegate, Monsignor Fan Noli, said that he bowed before the Council's decision, but did not recognize the competence of the Conference.

In the autumn of that year a revolt broke out among the Mirdites of Northern Albania, promoted and financed by Yugoslavia, who seized the opportunity to invade Albania and set up a bogus 'Mirdit Republic'. On November 2 the Albanian Government informed the League of the Yugoslav invasion and appealed for assistance. This time the Great Powers, particularly Italy and Great Britain, were in agreement and acted with vigour and speed. Mr. Lloyd George asked that the Council should be summoned at once to deal with the matter, as he considered that Yugoslavia's action constituted a menace to peace under the terms of Article 11 of the Covenant, and proposed that measures should be taken with a view to the application of Article 16 (providing for an economic boycott) against Yugoslavia if she failed to conform with her undertakings under the Covenant. The Council met in Paris on November 16, and Yugoslavia's conduct was severely stigmatized as an unprovoked and wholly unjustifiable aggression. In the end the Yugoslav delegate, while issuing a counter-protest against Albania's behaviour, said that his country agreed to respect the Albanian frontiers and to withdraw those

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of her troops who had crossed it. A commission of inquiry was appointed by the Council to ascertain if the Yugoslav forces had actually withdrawn from Albania, to make sure that no outside encouragement should promote risings within Albania and menace its internal peace, and advise the Council as to the best means for bringing the present disturbances to an end and for preventing their repetition.

In the meanwhile the Ambassadors' Conference had been dealing with Albanian affairs since June, 1921, and on November 9 of that year it arrived at the following decisions:

'The British Empire, France, Italy and Japan,

'Recognizing that the independence of Albania, as well as the integrity and inalienability of its frontiers, as they have been fixed by their decisions of November 9, 1921, is a question of international importance;

'Recognizing that the violation of the said frontiers, or of the independence of Albania, might constitute a menace to the strategic security of Italy;

'Have agreed upon the following points:

'1. The Governments who have signed the present decision recognize the Government of Albania constituted as a sovereign and independent State.

'2. A commission shall delimit the northern and north-eastern frontiers, under the conditions laid down in Article 3.'

A second decision deals with the necessary expenses, and a third provides that:

'1. In case Albania should find herself in the impossibility of maintaining her territorial integrity, she shall be at liberty to address to the Council of the League of Nations a request for foreign assistance.

'2. The Governments of the British Empire, France, Italy and Japan decide that in the above-mentioned

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case they will instruct their representatives on the Council of the League of Nations to recommend that Italy be entrusted with the re-establishment of the territorial frontiers of Albania.

'3. If Albania should be attacked and not appeal to the League of Nations the said Governments will inform the Council of the situation. Should the Council decide that intervention is necessary, they will instruct their representatives as is provided in Article 2.

'Should a majority of the Council of the League of Nations decide that intervention on its part is not advisable, the said Governments will re-examine the question, basing themselves on the principle contained in the preamble of the present declaration, viz. that any modification of the frontiers of Albania constitutes a danger for the security of Italy.'

These decisions conferred on Italy a peculiar position of predominance in Albania and appeared objectionable to certain foreign observers who are very sensitive about any measure which appears in some way advantageous to Italy.¹

Italy did not receive a regular mandate to deal with Albania, similar to those conferred on Great Britain and France for Palestine and Syria,² except as regards protection against outside aggression, but the other signatory Powers tacitly left Italy to take such measures as she deemed fit to consolidate the country and improve its economic conditions, without by any means renouncing the right to secure economic concessions in Albania for their own nationals, and indeed such

¹ Among others, the American writer Mr. Hamilton Lisk Armstrong, in an article printed in *Foreign Affairs* (New York) for January, 1928, while expressing his disapproval of this decision, says not a word about the Yugoslav invasion of Albania, of which the decision of the Conference was the outcome.

² These instruments conferred on the mandatory Powers the right of carrying on the administration of the mandated areas.

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concessions have been secured by persons of other than Italian nationality.

Since November, 1921, Albania has undergone many vicissitudes. The constitution was not at first definitely established; the government was entrusted to a provisional regency, under which various cabinets succeeded each other between 1921 and 1924. It was during this period that Ahmed Bey Zogu came into prominence. A chieftain of the Mati tribe, he had played a minor part in the events of the World War and had been interned by the Austrians in Vienna for having advocated the return of Prince William of Wied. He was elected to the Albanian Assembly, and after the Lushnja Congress he was twice Minister of the Interior, and also Commander-in-Chief of the forces raised to crush sundry rebellions, acquitting himself of his task with ruthless vigour. After the Tirana rising in March, 1922, he became Prime Minister. In June, 1924, Monsignor Fan Noli, an Albanian from near Adrianople, who had spent many years in the United States and had been selected as the representative of the Vatra, the most important Albanian society in that country,¹ raised a fresh revolution and with a following of 2,000 men drove Ahmed Zogu and his supporters from the country. Ahmed took refuge in Yugoslavia, while Fan Noli made himself head of the Government at Tirana. He declared his intention of breaking the power of the beys or large landowners and set out to institute a régime of a democratic and indeed demagogic character. The result was anarchy and general discontent, for Fan Noli, even if he was a well-meaning man, as his friends assert, was quite unsuited for the task of dealing with

¹ As a reward for having presented a large sum of money to the newly created Albanian State, the right of electing a member to the Albanian Parliament had been conferred on the Vatra.

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Albania or the Albanians, of whom he really had very little knowledge. He was friendly to Italy and thought that he could count on Italian support, but the Rome Government merely recognized him as the *de facto* government of the country and maintained normal diplomatic relations with it.

But in the autumn of 1924 Ahmed Zogu, who had secured the support of Yugoslavia—that Government acted on the supposition that Fan Noli was supported by Italy and that Ahmed Zogu, as Fan Noli's opponent, was consequently worth assisting—invaded Albania with some 3,000 followers. Fan Noli's government collapsed at once, and Ahmed easily made himself master of the country. In January, 1925, a republican form of government was established and Ahmed Zogu elected President. He became to all intents and purposes the absolute ruler of Albania, although nominally a constitutional president. Once having got into power, he showed no intention of playing Yugoslavia's game. He realized that Albania was not yet able to stand on her own feet and needed some form of outside support. This protection might be supplied by the League of Nations, of which Albania was a member. But the League is a long way off and has no military force at its disposal, so that in case of aggression its assistance would have to be secured through the individual Great Powers, would require time, and might therefore prove ineffective. Moreover, the League appeared to have a sort of grudge against Albania. That country, being in desperate financial straits, had appealed to the League for a financial adviser. An Englishman, with an excellent record in Egypt and suitable in every way, had been found and secured the support both of the British and Italian representatives. But the French delegate placed his veto on the appointment of a Briton and

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demanding that a neutral be selected. The choice fell on a Dutchman who had spent many years as a Civil Servant in the Dutch Indies, but it was an unfortunate one, and after a year's trial the Albanian Government felt that it could not afford to go on paying this gentleman a large salary for an inadequate return, and therefore dispensed with his services. This action placed Albania in an unfavourable light at Geneva, and the League has in consequence taken little subsequent interest in the country, so that when the question of securing assistance for the country arose once more it was felt at Tirana that the League was not likely to stand *in loco parentis*.

There were two other possibilities—Yugoslavia and Italy. Yugoslavia had, it is true, helped Ahmed Zogu to get into power; she had not, however, done so for his *beaux yeux*, nor out of disinterested love for Albania, but merely in the hope of dominating the country through him and perhaps eventually of securing the cession of a part of its territory. Yugoslavia has never regarded Albania as a buffer State useful to her as a protection against the possible encroachments of other neighbours, and still less as a Power with whom it was desirable to be on friendly terms, but as a Government holding various areas which she coveted for herself, especially the coast from the present frontier to some point south of Durazzo. Apart from the excessive Imperialism and Chauvinism with which most Yugoslavs are inspired and which make them desire to extend their frontiers in all directions to an unlimited extent at the expense of all their neighbours, there is also a reason peculiar to the Serbs as distinct from the other citizens of the Triune Kingdom which makes for an aggressive policy against Albania. The Serbs are always under the unconfessed fear that some day Croatia, Dalmatia and Montenegro may break away,

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in which case Serbia would find herself again cut off from the seaboard. If the Serbs were to descend on Albania, they would possess a stretch of coast free of the control of the Croats, Dalmatians and Montenegrins. The area in question is inhabited, it is true, by a wholly non-Serb people and is separated from Serbia by a series of high and impervious mountain ranges; but the first difficulty could be got over by applying the methods now enforced in the case of other alien subjects in Macedonia and elsewhere, and the second by building a railway which, although very costly, might perhaps be paid for by Serbia's generous foreign friends, or at least so the Serbs think. The expansionist policy can also be justified in their eyes and in those of certain foreign sympathizers by the fact that this or that coveted town or district once formed part of the Serbian Empire of Dushan or the Nemanjas, or that a mythical Serbian saint or hero lies buried in a church or convent beyond the actual border, or that certain frescoes in a ruined chapel were painted by a Serb hand five hundred years ago.¹

Ahmed Zogu, on the other hand, saw that Italian help might be more profitable and certainly less costly and dangerous for Albania. He knew that Italy had no aspirations to occupy Albanian territory, that her traditional policy had always been to favour an independent Albania and to prevent the country from falling into the hands of another Power hostile or potentially hostile to herself. In pursuing this policy Italy was acting from motives of intelligent self-interest, but this interest corresponded to that of Albania and Albanian freedom, and, as we have seen before, even if at times Italy had been unable to enforce it, it was because she had been obliged to defer to the

¹ These reasons may appear inadequate to the impartial outsider, but they will serve failing others.

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wishes or impositions of other Powers. Consequently the Head of the Albanian State decided to accept the assistance of Italy while his own country was unable to be entirely self-supporting. Moreover, in so acting he was conforming to the decision of the Conference of Ambassadors.

Italian policy towards Albania differed essentially from that of Yugoslavia not only because Italy did not aspire to seize Albanian territory, but because her policy was based on an actual necessity for security, as was indeed affirmed in the decision of the Ambassadors' Conference in 1921, and not, as that of Yugoslavia, on a necessity which might arise in certain given circumstances yet to be realized, such as is Yugoslavia's fear of losing the Croatian and Dalmatian coast. By the terms of the Treaty of London Italy's security in the Adriatic had been in some measure provided for by assigning to her the northern part of the Dalmatian coast. But by the Treaty of Rapallo (November, 1920) Italy had ceded the whole of her own part of Dalmatia (except the town of Zara) to Yugoslavia, so that she was once more menaced in the Adriatic as she had been in pre-war days. For these reasons it became necessary for her to be guaranteed against the occupation of the Albanian coast by a potentially unfriendly Power or one that might place or be forced to place that coast at the disposal of such a Power. At the same time reasons of expense and of strategic difficulty told entirely against an occupation of Albania by Italy, even if she had been minded to carry out such an enterprise.

Moreover, Albania needed not only diplomatic assistance and military guarantees, but also financial help to develop her resources and create the machinery of a modern State. Italy was in a far better position to supply such help than Yugoslavia. Other Great

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Powers might have supplied it, as easily or even more easily, but having no direct interest in Albanian affairs they showed no intention of doing so.

Let us now see how Italy has fulfilled her undertakings towards Albania—those entrusted to her by the decision of 1921 and those which the Albanian Government wished her to fulfil. The three most urgent requirements of Albania are external security, internal peace and the possibility of economic development—the first two are conditions *sine qua non* of the third. The country, although nearer to the West than any other part of the Balkans, is in a more primitive condition than almost any other part of Europe. This is due to five centuries of Turkish rule, during which the Ottoman Government neglected Albania even more than any other part of the Empire, and left her totally unprovided with any of the appurtenances of civilized life. No railways, no ports, practically no roads, few and inadequate schools, no attempt to develop agricultural or other resources—such was the condition of the country until a few years ago when a beginning of progress was at last undertaken.

The first and most necessary task which Italy assumed in order to enable Albania to exist was the reorganization or rather the creation of the army. Before 1926 nothing was simpler to produce in Albania than a revolution, especially if outside forces intervened to produce it. Along the frontiers and on both sides of it are many wild primitive tribes, accustomed from time immemorial to anarchic conditions and internecine warfare. Beyond the frontier, in Yugoslav territory, besides many such autochthonous Albanian tribes, there were also a certain number of exiles from Albania itself, opponents of whatever régime happened to be in power at the time. With these elements it was very

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easy, by expending a certain amount of money and generously distributing arms, officers and N.C.O.'s, to organize bands of komitadjis and effect a raid into Albania. As no force capable of repelling these incursions existed, the bands could march on the capital almost unopposed, upset the Government and set up another more amenable to the policy of those who promoted the incursion. It will be remembered that Fan Noli had seized power with 2,000 men and Ahmed Zogu with 3,000. As long as this state of insecurity existed, no economic progress was possible, and the lack of economic progress contributed to maintain the state of insecurity.

As it was Italy's interest that Albania should be peaceful and prosperous, it was her policy to make that country capable of resisting aggression and to prevent if possible any attempt at aggression. The first concrete act of this policy was the conclusion at Tirana on November 27, 1926, of the Pact of Friendship and Security, which reads as follows:

'1. Italy and Albania recognize that any disturbance of the political, juridical and territorial status quo of Albania is contrary to their mutual political interests.

'2. For the protection of the above-mentioned interests, the High Contracting Parties undertake to lend each other mutual assistance and cordial collaboration; they likewise undertake not to conclude other political or military agreements prejudicial to the interests of the other Party which are also defined in the present Pact.

'3. The High Contracting Parties undertake to submit their disputes to a special procedure of conciliation and arbitration.

'4. The present Pact shall last for five years and may be denounced or renewed one year before it lapses.

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'5. The present Pact shall be ratified and subsequently registered at the League of Nations. Ratifications will be exchanged in Rome.'

This treaty produced great indignation in Yugoslavia and some alarm elsewhere, especially in so-called pacifist circles, where it was regarded as part and parcel of Mussolini's general policy of aggression; some bright intellects went so far as to depict Yugoslavia as the innocent victim of a sinister Italian plot. But in point of fact the treaty was merely a practical realization of the mandate conferred on Italy by the Conference of Ambassadors, and indeed Italy was doing no more than defining with regard to Albania the general obligations which all States members of the League of Nations are supposed to undertake in case any other member State should be the victim of aggression. No one could object to it except a Power contemplating aggression against Albania. It was, it is true, claimed in some quarters that Italy not only guaranteed Albania against external aggression, but also against any attempt from within to alter the present form of government; but actually she only undertook to protect the Albanian State against revolutionary attempts organized from outside, and nominally intended to change the government, but in reality aiming at the destruction of Albanian independence and practically annexing it to another State.

After the conclusion of the Pact the Franco-Yugoslav Pact of Friendship was published. Although it contained few provisions to which exception could be taken, the moment chosen for its conclusion (it had been initialled some time before) suggested that it was an answer to the Italo-Albanian Pact of Friendship, and made Yugoslavia believe that France had given her a free hand in any action which she might take against Albania or Italy. It certainly cannot be

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claimed that Albania had failed to try to conciliate Yugoslavia. Since the end of the World War she had made repeated attempts to arrive at an understanding and even to conclude an alliance with her Slav neighbour. She had offered Yugoslavia the most ample economic concessions, including the right to build a railway in the Drin valley, and it is asserted that at one time she had actually applied for admission into the Little Entente. As Signor Mussolini had himself declared, Italy had informed Albania that she would not object to the conclusion of an Albanian-Yugoslav treaty on the lines of the one between Albania and Italy. But Yugoslavia steadily refused all offers of Albanian friendship, showing clearly that her policy towards her small neighbour was based on an unswerving determination to crush it out of existence.

The answer to the Franco-Yugoslav Treaty was the conclusion on November 22, 1927, of an Italo-Albanian Treaty of Alliance, of which the following are the provisions:¹

'1. All treaties previously concluded between the two High Contracting Parties after the admission of Albania to the League of Nations shall be accurately and faithfully observed within the limits laid down in the respective texts, in such a manner as to establish a sincere and perfect friendship between the two peoples and the two Governments, as well as mutual assistance, on the understanding that each of the High Parties shall support the interests and advantage of the other with the same zeal which it would apply in supporting its own.

'2. There shall be an unalterable defensive alliance between Italy on the one hand and Albania on the other

¹ The treaty had been negotiated some time before, but it was not signed until after the announcement of the Franco-Yugoslav Treaty.

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for twenty years, which may be denounced in the course of the eighteenth or nineteenth year of its duration. Should this not occur, the alliance shall be considered tacitly renewed for an equal period. The two High Contracting Parties shall devote all their attention and means to guarantee the security of their States and their mutual defence and protection against any external attack.

'3. In consequence of the undertakings assumed in the preceding articles, the two High Contracting Parties will act in agreement for the maintenance of peace and tranquillity, and in the case that one of the High Contracting Parties should be menaced by a war not provoked by it, the other Party shall employ all the measures best calculated not only to prevent hostilities, but also to secure just satisfaction for the menaced Party.

'4. Should recourse have been had to every means of conciliation without result, each of the two High Parties undertakes to follow the fate of the other, placing at the disposal of its Ally all the military, financial and other resources calculated to contribute to overcome the conflict, provided that such assistance be applied for by the menaced Party.

'5. For all the hypotheses foreseen in Article 4, the two High Contracting Parties undertake not to conclude or initiate negotiations for peace, an armistice or a truce except by common agreement.

'6. The present Treaty has been signed in four original texts, two of which in the Italian language and two in the Albanian language, which are equally valid.

'7. The present Treaty shall be ratified and subsequently registered at the League of Nations. The ratifications shall be exchanged in Rome.'

The terms of the treaty coincide purposely with those of the Anglo-Portuguese-Dutch Treaty of

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Alliance of May 16, 1703. It secured considerable popularity for Italy in Albania, because it supplied a firmer guarantee against aggression than the Pact of Friendship. On the other hand, it caused still further irritation at Belgrade, but in the meanwhile the French Government had let Yugoslavia understand that it was by no means prepared to give *carte blanche* to any policy of adventure in which she might see fit to indulge, and this helped to clear the air.

The system whereby Italy undertook to assist Albania was to make her as far as possible self-supporting. It was necessary to begin by creating a small but efficient and well-equipped army capable of resisting any aggression by irregular bands. An Italian staff officer, Colonel (now General) Pariani, a man of exceptional ability, was selected for the purpose and appointed chief of the President's Military Cabinet with functions analogous to those of a Minister of War (Albania has no such Minister). General Pariani was accompanied by a small staff of other Italian officers. Military service is compulsory and lasts eighteen months, and in 1927-28 an army was created consisting of a single division on a tertiary basis, i.e. formed of three groups, each comprising three infantry battalions, three mountain batteries of two guns each, and one company of engineers. There are, in addition, one other company of engineers, the King's Royal Guard composed of Mati tribesmen, and some other small units. In all, the army comprises from 7,000 to 9,000 men on a peace footing. There is a second skeleton division, which would be mobilized in war time, and other forces could also be raised in case of need, as every year the number of trained reservists increases. An Italian officer is attached to each group, each battalion, each battery and each company of engineers, and there are Italian medical



H. M. ZOGU, KING OF ALBANIA

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officers with the larger units. The administration of the army has been completely overhauled, and the corruption formerly existing has been done away with. The troops are now well fed, properly armed, clothed and equipped, and regularly paid (in the past the officers' pay was often several months in arrears).

The Albanian soldier was always excellent raw material, but he was not properly trained and the officers left a good deal to be desired. In order to make good this latter deficiency, a military college, a school for artillery officers and one for reserve officers have been created, with some Italian instructors attached to them, and a new and better type of native officer is now being formed.

Another difficulty was the inadequate sense of nationality among the Albanian people as a whole; they only possessed a rudimentary race consciousness, and Italy has set to work to arouse this national sense in every way, with the final object of endowing the Albanians with a strong national feeling so as to make Italian assistance unnecessary. A new voluntary organization of Albanian youth has been created on the lines of the Italian *Balilla*, while the older boys from 16 to 20 years of age attending school are compulsorily enrolled in the pre-military training corps corresponding to the Italian *Avanguardisti*; Italian instructors are attached to both organizations, which are on a strictly patriotic and sporting basis. The barracks are indeed being made into schools for Albanian national feeling.

The army is now thoroughly efficient and presents a most workmanlike appearance. Military service is popular, and the Italian officers, of whom there are in all about fifty in the country, have succeeded in gaining the confidence and affection of the men and the esteem and respect of their Albanian colleagues.

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If Albania were to be attacked by the regular forces of her far more powerful neighbours, this little army could not successfully resist for long, but such action would of course mean war and involve the intervention of the Great Powers and of the League of Nations. The Albanian army could, however, at least hold out until such intervention took place. Its primary function is to prevent any attempt at invasion by komitadji bands organized and financed from outside.

In addition to the army, there is a gendarmerie, to which the British General Sir Jocelyn Percy and a dozen other British officers are attached as inspectors. The British officers have no executive authority over the gendarmerie, which takes its orders from the Albanian prefects. It has been asserted by certain critics of Italy's Albanian policy that this gendarmerie would suffice to safeguard the country's security, and that it was unnecessary to create an army which absorbs so large a proportion of the State's small revenues. The answer, however, is obvious. A gendarmerie, to be of any use as such, must be scattered all over the country in very small units, and could not concentrate at any particular point where aggression was attempted or threatened, especially in view of the difficulties of communication in a mountainous country insufficiently provided with roads. Its duties are of an entirely different nature.

Although Italy's military policy in Albania has been accused of having an aggressive character and constituting a threat to the peace of the Balkans, I think I have shown that the character and functions attributed to the Albanian army as organized by Italy refute that charge. Its objectives are, indeed, essentially defensive. If Italy did harbour aggressive intentions, which she does not, even if such intentions may exist, but elsewhere than in Italy, Albania would

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be the very last area whence she would choose to operate; only persons absolutely innocent of the least military knowledge could think otherwise. To send a large Italian expeditionary force across the Adriatic would require several weeks (twenty divisions could not be transported in less than several weeks) whereas the army of any of Albania's Balkan neighbours could concentrate on the spot in a few days, and even if the Albanian army were able to hold up invasion for a short time, it would be by diplomatic intervention that the invasion would be restrained.¹

That the intention to foment a revolution by means of the incursion of armed bands into Albania really existed in Yugoslavia is proved by the events of the winter of 1928. Abundant evidence was forthcoming that komitadji bands officered and financed and armed by the Yugoslav frontier authorities were concentrating on the borders of Albania, together with ample depots of arms, munitions and provisions. Had Italy wanted a pretext for sending a force into Albania and attacking Yugoslavia, this was an excellent one. But while she had no intention of provoking a war or creating international complications, she did not wish to let the intended aggression materialize, as such an occurrence

¹ In an amusing article published in *No More War* it was stated that Italy had concentrated vast stores of arms in Albania and was ready at any moment to send unarmed troops to pick them up, much in the same way as one sometimes leaves one's dress clothes at a club. The same paper asserted among other things that many tons of barbed wire had been landed at Durazzo by the Italians for purposes of trench warfare; as a matter of fact what the very innocent author of the article had seen was not barbed wire, but wire fencing for a chicken farm run by a German. The story reminds one of the panic caused in a seaside village on the English South Coast during the Napoleonic Wars, when a barrel of frogs ordered by a scientific gentleman for experimental purposes, but mislaid by the way, was discovered by the inhabitants and believed by them to be part of the commissariat of the French army sent on ahead preparatory to a landing.

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would have proved equally dangerous to the peace of Europe. She therefore limited herself to informing the other Powers of these preparations. The Yugoslav Government blustered and denied the existence of any military preparation on the Albanian border, and invited the Great Powers to send their military attachés to inquire into the matter on the spot. But in the meanwhile it carefully eliminated all trace of the preparations denounced by Italy, so that if the military attachés had accepted the invitation they would have found nothing. The various Western Governments of course realized this, and the invitation was declined. The storm blew over, and the result was that the intended aggression never took place and that the likelihood of others being attempted in future was very considerably diminished, and as the Albanian army improved in efficiency the danger was almost wholly eliminated. Thus Italy was able to preserve the peace at a moment of acute tension without mobilizing or moving a man or a gun.

Italy's economic policy in Albania is destined to have wide repercussions in the near future, but its true character has often been wilfully misjudged. Italy, as we have seen, needs economic expansion of many different kinds, like other nations, and indeed more than other nations, but has far fewer opportunities for practising it. The Balkans are a promising field for one aspect of this expansion, and Italy has developed her trade with all the Balkan States, including Yugoslavia herself. But in Albania, which is so near the Italian coast and which is in need of everything if it is to evolve into a modern and progressive State, it was natural that Italy's economic policy should be more active than that of other Powers. She has indeed no economic monopoly and makes no attempt to exclude other countries from trading with Albania or



ROYAL BODYGUARDS AT TIRANA



BRITISH OFFICERS OF THE ALBANIAN
GENDARMERIE

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securing economic concessions—the most important and promising concessions for prospecting for oil is that of the Anglo-Persian—but when she can supply the goods needed or secure a concession for her own citizens she naturally tries to make the best of her opportunities; any other country would do the same.

The first two Italian undertakings have been the Bank of Albania and the S.V.E.A. (*Società sviluppo economico Albania*). For several years after Albania's admission to statehood she remained without a bank of issue or a currency of her own. One foreign bank operated in the country and half a dozen currencies circulated; an English five-pound note might be exchanged for a couple of French napoleons, some Italian lire, some Austrian kronen, Serbian dinars, Greek drachmæ, Bulgarian leva and a few indecipherable Turkish metalliks. After the failure of the League of Nations expert to reform the financial situation, Italy undertook the task. A National Bank of Albania was instituted with a capital of 12,000,000 gold francs, partly subscribed by Italy herself, partly by Albanians and partly by foreigners, Italy having control. An Albanian currency has been created and the new Albanian notes soon gained the confidence of the Albanian public and are accepted by it in exchange for the napoleons which formerly alone found favour. The advantage of having a national currency cannot be exaggerated, and the Bank represents one of the chief and most useful economic ties between Italy and Albania to-day.

The other urgent necessity was a loan for public works. Albania had tried to secure a loan at different times; at the Genoa Conference in 1922 the Albanian representative applied for one, offering as a guarantee of security 'le caractère noble du peuple albanais' and asserting that fraudulent bankruptcy was unknown in

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his country. But the appeal did not find favour with the delegates of the Great Powers, nor with the international financiers. Italy, however, was able later to raise a loan of 50,000,000 gold francs for Albania by means of the S.V.E.A., the money being supplied by a group of Italian banks and the Exchange Institute, at an interest (including amortization, etc.) of 5,600,000 gold francs, guaranteed by the customs, the cigarette paper monopoly and some other less important assets. It was said that as the total budget of Albania is only between 25,000,000 and 30,000,000 gold francs, she could never pay the interest on the loan and by defaulting would place herself absolutely in the hands of Italy whenever that Government chose to foreclose her mortgages. It has also been claimed¹ that Albania's indebtedness, including bankers' fees, advertising, Italian taxes, etc., amounts not to 50,000,000 gold francs but to 70,000,000. As a matter of fact the increase was simply due to the conversion, effected at the suggestion of the Italian Government, of the 50,000,000 gold francs into lire at a moment when the lira was about 130 to the £; in consequence of the subsequent improvement and stabilization of the Italian currency the 50,000,000 gold francs did become about 70,000,000, but the difference was all to Albania's benefit, as she was liable for the interest only on the 50,000,000. Moreover, the money raised by the loan is invested in the Albanian bank and returns interest at the rate of 6½ per cent., so that she has to pay full interest only on that part of the sum which is annually expended, plus the difference between the 6½ per cent. and the full interest. As the money is expended the liability increases in a corresponding measure, but on the other hand the benefits accruing from the public works executed by means of the loan also increase, and

¹See H. F. Armstrong's above-quoted article.

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Albania, as time goes on, will find her national income increasing and will therefore be able to pay the amount due with increasing ease. In the meanwhile Italy has granted her a respite on the payment of the comparatively small amount due.

The S.V.E.A. has been entrusted with the expenditure of the loan, and is devoting it to the construction of public works. It has been asserted that the sum has been spent entirely on armaments and on the useless Durazzo-Tirana railway (which Italy of course intends to use for strategic purposes!). On the contrary, no part of the loan has been spent on armaments, while the railway had been begun before the loan was floated, out of Albania's own resources and against the advice of the Italian Government; it was only at the urgent insistence of the Albanian Government that the S.V.E.A. consented to allocate a very small portion of the loan as a contribution towards the expenses of the line, now that its construction had been begun; the line will probably end by being an electric light railway or tramway.

The bulk of the 50,000,000 gold francs is being spent on four public works of essential importance, viz. the port of Durazzo, and the three main roads, the Puka road from Scutari to Ura Viziret and the frontier (about 100 kilometres), the Mati road from the Mati bridge to Mageller (120 kilometres) and eventually to Dibra, and the road from Tirana to Elbasan for the communications between the valleys of the Semeni and the Shkumbi and the capital (60 kilometres). Furthermore, bridges over the principal rivers are being built or repaired so as to abolish the ferries, and a sum of 1,000,000 gold francs has been allotted to the Albanian Government as a contribution towards the public works which it is carrying out directly. That Government has built 150 kilometres of other roads and provides

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for the upkeep and repair of all existing roads. The conditions on which the S.V.E.A. is performing the work are far less onerous for Albania than those demanded by other firms for the same purposes; a French firm, for instance, had proposed to build the bridges on condition that all the material supplied be paid for in advance, together with the profits on the same, plus 30 per cent. on all expenses.

The importance of the port of Durazzo is too obvious to need further comment. There is indeed no properly equipped port in all Albania, and at Durazzo itself, the port for Tirana, it is often impossible to land goods in the winter for days or even weeks on end. At San Giovanni di Medua conditions are worse, while Valona and Santi Quaranta are merely natural harbours protected against some winds but not against others. Work at Durazzo is proceeding slowly but steadily, and in two years' time the port should be finished.

The roads are equally necessary. There are large and fertile areas in many parts of the country capable of producing good crops, which cannot be disposed of on account of the lack of roads. Some districts can only be reached from Tirana after six days on horseback, and are almost entirely cut off from the outside world during the winter months. It has indeed been claimed in the usual quarters that the roads of Albania are being built exclusively for military purposes as a means of aggression against Yugoslavia. One has but to look at a map to see that such a statement is nonsensical. Of course any road can be used by armies, but to pretend that roads from little coast villages with open roadsteads or roads establishing communications between the chief centres of the country are military roads argues a very imperfect knowledge of the meaning of the expression.

But there remains another category of very im-

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portant public works which have not yet been tackled, viz. land reclamation and drainage. Originally it had been intended that the S.V.E.A. should be entrusted with the task. But on closer examination they proved too vast for its resources. The waters of the principal Albanian rivers pour down into the plains during the rainy season, bringing down masses of silt, earth, vegetable matter and tree-trunks, flooding vast areas of land and converting them into swamps which in summer become breeding-grounds for the deadly anopheles mosquito. For centuries the courses of these rivers have been left unregulated by the hand of man, and what should be the most fertile and productive part of the country remains uncultivated, or where it is farmed at all it is in a most rudimentary manner, and the workers are all infected with malarial fever and rendered incapable of sustained effort. During the War scores of thousands of Italian soldiers on the Devoli and the Voyussa were stricken with fever and large numbers died. No agricultural progress is possible in these parts of the country until malaria is eliminated.

The Italian Red Cross and other foreign organizations have done much to attenuate the scourge, but a far greater effort on a wider scale must be made if the problem is to be radically solved. One agricultural enterprise already in the course of execution is that of Shiak, between Tirana and Durazzo, where an Italian land company has reclaimed and improved an estate with considerable success. The land is very fertile, and with good drainage and scientific methods of farming has proved capable of bearing valuable crops. A small number of Italian families are settled on it and are teaching the natives what can be done in this connexion by hard and intelligent labour and skilled management. A careful survey is now being carried out with the object of preparing a scheme for the

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complete reclamation of at least one of the chief malarial areas, and the Voyussa basin has been selected as the most promising for the first experiment on a large scale.

That which has succeeded at Shiak can succeed elsewhere. If the soil is stony near Santi Quaranta, in many other parts of the country the humus is of great depth, the hills are well wooded and there is an abundance—sometimes a super-abundance—of water. The general impression produced by the country round Tirana is of a green, smiling land.

For this transformation a great deal of money will be required, but as good returns are a certainty, provided the work is carried out intelligently, the money will be found, even in Italy, and when reclamation is accomplished Italy will have rendered a lasting service to Albania.

Albania has other possibilities of economic development. The forests in the interior are of great value, but as a rule they cannot be exploited on account of the lack of roads, although, as we have seen, this deficiency is to some extent being made good. Various concerns have secured concessions for boring for oil, and although as yet only small quantities have been found, the prospects are said to be good. Industry is only in a rudimentary stage, nor is there much likelihood of its developing on a large scale for many a long year.

The people in the mass are not dissatisfied with Italian tutelage, which is in no ways oppressive or irksome, and in its political and military aspects it is indeed popular. The Albanians realize that without Italian help their country would be exposed to invasion and perhaps annihilation, and that they are not yet capable of standing on their own feet. They are, however, a little suspicious of Italian, and indeed all

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foreign, economic activity, fearing that their resources, which they imagine to be much greater than they really are, at all events for the present, may fall entirely into foreign hands and be exploited solely for the benefit of foreigners. But such suspicions, common to all Oriental peoples, can be allayed by including Albanians in all foreign enterprises, as shareholders and even as directors and managers.

The King is a strong supporter of the Italian connexion, as he sees that the choice lies between an independent Albania supported by Italy, with himself as ruler, and a partition of the country among its neighbours. He is undoubtedly a sincere patriot and devotes his whole time and thought to the improvement of the conditions of his people. Unfortunately, however, in the course of his adventurous career he has come to be the object of various tribal vendettas, and more than one attempt on his life has been made; one of them was organized and financed by foreign enemies under the ægis of a foreign legation, but was fortunately discovered and denounced in time by an English friend. These attempts and others organized by purely political enemies were among the reasons which induced him in 1928 to assume the Royal Crown. As a King he can assure a succession (at present he is unmarried, but is seeking for a bride), and his death would now merely mean that his heir would succeed — 'le Roi est mort, vive le Roi!' He is certainly a brave man, as he has shown on many occasions; but as he sees no object in getting shot from behind a wall or a bush, he takes precautions, and seldom emerges from the precincts of his palace, except when he goes to his villa at Durazzo for the sea-bathing in the summer. He is closely guarded by the picturesque red-uniformed body-guard of his own Mati tribesmen, who are devoted to him.

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In appearance Ahmed Zogu is a pleasant, distinguished-looking and well-mannered youngish man, and nothing about him suggests the Oriental despot, although those who know him intimately assert that he can be ruthless with his enemies and above all with those of Albania. He is intelligent and hard-working, but not a good linguist; educated in Turkey, the two languages which he knows best are Turkish and Albanian, and during the War while he was interned in Vienna he was able to learn a certain amount of German—the only Western tongue with which he is familiar. His palace is a comparatively small building within a walled enclosure, which also contains some other houses and offices. The interior decorations are very typical of Royal palaces in every country. He works from morning to night and seems to have no amusements. Although leading this sedentary life, he is extraordinarily well informed about everything which occurs in any part of the country. He is careful to respect the outward forms of constitutionalism, and he seldom proposes directly the measures he wishes to see enacted, preferring that they should emanate or appear to emanate from Parliament or public opinion. His great difficulty is that of finding suitable men to fill the various administrative posts in the Government. The political class is small, and its members (not all inspired by sincere patriotism) are mostly without experience, except those who had been in the Turkish service—certainly not the best school of public administration. The tendency to corruption exists as in all other Oriental countries. A more rigorous control is now exercised than in the past, and an attempt is being made to create a more efficient and reliable class of administrators. In this task the King is helped by a capable Englishman, Colonel Stirling, who enjoys his full confidence and acts as



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OLD BRIDGE OVER THE SHKUMBI NEAR ELBASAN

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Inspector of the Government departments; although he cannot always enforce the measures which he thinks necessary, the mere fact of the existence of this control contributes to restrain those who would act dishonestly. The Italian authorities do not interfere in any way in the internal affairs of the country and limit themselves to giving occasional advice, but they do not wish to exercise undue pressure on the Albanian Government or its organs.

The same political class which is not too favourable to the King is also not friendly towards Italian influence. In the past certain politicians could always secure *bakshish* from half a dozen foreign Governments who were intriguing against each other for influence in Albania. But to-day these pleasant financial possibilities have been eliminated and the sweets of office are usually limited to modest salaries and occasional gifts from the King. On the other hand, the most honest men in the country are becoming more favourable both to the King and the Italian connexion. When a new and capable official class is formed, the country will become self-supporting politically as well as economically and militarily.

Certain foreign critics resent Italy's semi-privileged position in Albania, and demand that the country should be left entirely to its own resources. I think that I have said enough to prove that such a course would only lead to the partition of the country, so that those who advocate it must be regarded as favourable to the complete disappearance of Albania as a separate State and the probable annihilation of the Albanian people. Secondly, if Italy does in future secure certain advantages for herself from the undoubted benefits which she is conferring on Albania to-day, there is nothing immoral in that. Other countries have done the same in analogous circumstances—

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Great Britain in Egypt and Palestine, France in Morocco and Syria, France and Spain in Morocco. The Italians have as much right to expand peacefully as any other people.

There are two aspects of King Zogu's policy which call for some explanation. In the early days of his career he leaned for support chiefly on the beys or large landowners, in contrast to the policy of Monsignor Fan Noli, who advocated the expropriation of their estates. Expropriation would certainly have proved disastrous to the agricultural economy of a primitive country like Albania, unprepared as yet for a system of small ownership and co-operation. But to-day the King no longer appears to rely so much on the beys, and there is talk of agrarian reform; these reforms, however, if they really are contemplated at all, are not likely to extend to expropriation of private estates and will probably be limited to a distribution of the State lands among the landless peasantry. This would be a move in the right direction.

Another measure, which is already being carried out to some extent and is in harmony with the proposed distribution of State lands, is the attempt to induce the political exiles to repatriate, and in this policy the King is being strongly encouraged by the Italian Government, which sees in it an element of stability. Day by day an increasing number of his former opponents who had taken refuge abroad and intrigued against him, drift back to Albania, become *rallié* to the Government, and either receive land to cultivate or official appointments. This of course strengthens the King's position considerably and renders the danger of a rebellion fomented from outside ever more remote. There is another category of Albanians whom the King is trying to attract. We have seen how large numbers of men of Albanian race dwell

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beyond the frontiers of the State, especially in the Kossovo area. There is a party in Albania who advocate an Irredentist policy and demand that this *Albania irredenta* should be annexed. But although the King no doubt regrets the enslavement of such large numbers of his co-nationals, he realizes that an Irredentist policy would inevitably lead to war, and this he is most anxious to avoid. He consequently limits himself to attracting as many of the Kossoviots as possible to come and settle in Albania, where the extra mass of labour will be useful for the purpose of developing the country. The distribution of State lands would again be useful for the settlement of these new immigrants. Many of them indeed have already come over from beyond the border where life is made ever more intolerable for them.

His Majesty's attitude towards religion is a curious one. He himself is a Moslem, as are the majority of the Albanians. In the North there are the Catholic Mirdites, while the South Albanians are prevalently Orthodox. The people as a whole are by no means fanatical, whatever their persuasion may be, except perhaps the Catholics, who are more strictly observant than the others. The King, who is anything but a fanatic, has always been interested in securing an autocephalous Orthodox Church for his Orthodox subjects as an affirmation of national independence, and in fact, as we have seen in connexion with the Church in Italy's Ægean possessions, by the canons of the Orthodox Church any area which becomes detached from Turkey has a right to a Church independent of the Constantinople Patriarchate. But the Patriarchate, without definitely refusing such a concession, as it would have had no right to do, adopted an obstructive and dilatory attitude, refusing to answer the request. The King tried to constitute an Albanian

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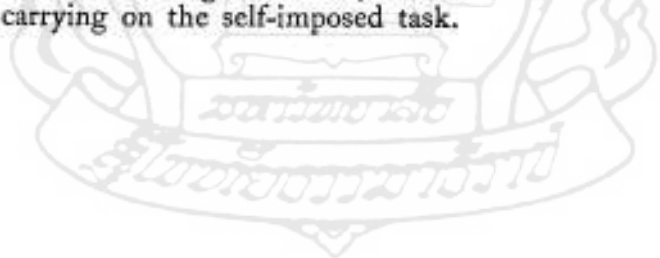
synod which would set up the autocephalous Church; but at least two bishops were necessary in order to consecrate others capable of forming the synod and only one of the existing Albanian Orthodox bishops, Monsignor Bessarion, was prepared to take such action, which might be regarded as a form of schism. However, a second bishop was forthcoming, oddly enough in Yugoslavia, and thus it was possible to create the bishops necessary to form a synod and the Albanian autocephalous Church was created. The Patriarchate objected strongly, as it had done years ago in the case of the creation of the Bulgarian Exarchate which it never recognized, but the new Church has been accepted by the Orthodox community in Albania without opposition. It was said at the time that the new bishops were not impeccable from various points of view, but that they were at all events no worse than the men whom they had superseded. All who are familiar with ecclesiastical matters in the Near East are aware that the moral standards of the Orthodox episcopate and clergy are never very high, and the public is apt to take this state of things for granted.

The King is very anxious to show himself free from Moslem prejudices and to avoid stressing either his own adherence to Islam or the Islamic faith of the majority of his citizens. Hence his earnest desire to see a Catholic cathedral arising in the principal square of Tirana opposite the chief mosque and to conciliate the Catholics of the North. He wishes to see all religions on an equal footing, and he is believed even to tend to accentuate the division between the Bektashi and the Orthodox Moslems, so that there should be not three confessions but four, no one of them much more numerous than the others. What future developments in the religious situation of Albania will follow it is difficult to say, but there is every reason to

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believe that religious differences are unlikely to cause serious difficulties.

The only other country, besides her immediate Balkan neighbours and Italy, taking an interest in Albanian affairs, is Great Britain, but this interest is not political and does not for the present affect the action of the British Government. It is rather a benevolent and charitable interest, limited to a small number of kind-hearted people who wish to bring relief to the poorer sections of the Albanian population, especially to those who are suffering from malaria and other diseases. The late Aubrey Herbert had been devoted to the Albanians for many years, and was temporarily attached to the Italian army in Albania during the War. After the War he continued to interest himself in Albanian relief work until his activities were cut short by his premature death. They were, however, continued in his memory by his mother, the late Dowager Countess of Carnarvon, who, in spite of her advanced age, paid repeated visits to the country regardless of her own weak health, and organized various forms of assistance and relief, contributing handsomely out of her own means and raising funds among her friends. She, too, has now died, and her daughter-in-law, Mr. Herbert's widow, is carrying on the self-imposed task.



APPENDIX

THE ARCHÆOLOGY OF ALBANIA

ITALY has rendered one service to Albania of a purely intellectual character, which will constitute when fully accomplished, an important contribution to knowledge—the archæological exploration of the country. The first attempt at an investigation of this kind goes back to five centuries ago; Ciriaco de' Pizzicolli of Ancona sailed for Albania in 1418 and visited Durazzo, Valona, Porto Palermo and Butrinto, collecting a large quantity of antique fragments and archæological data, of which he left a detailed account in his copious notes. Since his day many other scholars have glanced at the visible antiquities of Albania, but no systematic exploration was undertaken until 1924, when, as a result of the Italo-Albanian archæological convention, Prof. Luigi Ugolini, a distinguished young Italian scholar, was sent out at the head of an archæological mission to conduct a careful examination of all the existing remains, to make some prospective excavations in a few spots, and eventually to carry out more thorough and complete excavations in those places which the preliminary work should indicate as the most likely to yield important discoveries.

The first results of Prof. Ugolini's activities concerned the earliest history of Albania, of which practically nothing was known. The data which he has collected on the prehistoric period is of considerable interest; the objects found in the necropolis of Komani

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in North Albania, which belongs to the protohistoric or Illyrian period,¹ although of archaic character, belong to a much more recent epoch; some of the tombs in which they are found are indeed of the third, fourth and even fifth centuries A.D., showing that the Albanians continued in that age, after the Roman legions had 'thundered past', to make and use objects of a far more primitive civilization. In South Albania Prof. Ugolini found objects and utensils of a Greek and of an Illyrian type side by side, yet both belonging to the same epoch. Albanian patriots will no doubt derive satisfaction from the discovery that objects of the same purely Illyrian or proto-Albanian type as those found in the Komani necropolis have also been found in districts which are well outside the present political frontiers of their country.

Traces of important Greek colonies are abundant along the coast, some of them dating back to the seventh century B.C. Epidamnus (re-named Dyrrhachium) and Apollonia were Greek cities of Corinthian origin, while others were founded by the people of Corcyra (Corfu). Prof. Ugolini's most interesting finds of the Greek period were made at Feniki in the province of Argyrecaastro, between Delvino and Santi Quaranta. Here in 1924 on the summit of a rocky eminence the Italian archæologist came upon the vast remains of an acropolis, seven times as large as that of Athens, surrounded by a circuit of walls formed of blocks of great solidity several metres high. On beginning to excavate the ground, where previously only the walls and some Roman and Byzantine fragments were visible, a beautiful, worked thesaurus of Hellenic type came to light, adorned with Roman

¹ The Albanians of to-day are regarded as the descendants of the ancient Illyrians, but the country was previously inhabited by another still earlier race.

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columns of a later date and subsequently used as a baptistery in Christian times. Other Roman remains were also unearthed by Prof. Ugolini, including a large cistern, 19 metres long and 5 metres high, and many fragments of sculpture and architecture and not a few inscriptions. Fenikí was the Phœnice of the Ancients described by Polybius.

In 1928 work was begun at Butrinto, because Prof. Ugolini, after a first summary examination, was convinced that excavations there would yield good results, and also because many ancient legends reported by Virgil connect that city both with Troy and with Æneas's journey to Italy. He was not disappointed, and in a few months' work made some extremely valuable finds. The most notable monument discovered was the great gate to the acropolis, which had been previously completely interred; it is 5 metres in height, in an excellent state of preservation, composed of huge blocks of stone similar to those of the wall which it pierces, and dates from the fourth century B.C. A Roman wall of the Imperial age was also discovered, probably belonging to ancient baths of considerable size; it is arcaded, with niches in the pillars, each niche adorned with a statue. Of the five statues hitherto found three are in good condition; one is a female head in marble of the most perfect Greek workmanship, unmistakably of the Praxitelean school. Of a much later period is the fine Byzantine baptistery, with its beautiful mosaic pavement in marbles of many colours, adorned with symbolic figures of deer, the Cross Triumphant and a trellis vine with grapes and two peacocks representing the Eucharist; columns from a Roman building have also been added.

The Roman conquest of Albania was much more thorough than that of the Greeks. The latter occupied or founded a number of cities of high civilization along

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the coast, but restricted their domination to the seaboard, whereas the Romans penetrated into the interior, driving their great roads deep inland to all parts of the country and beyond. Wherever Prof. Ugolini went he came upon traces of Roman rule—stone slabs of the roads, cippi, fragments of statuary, inscriptions, etc., and often the local place-names betray undoubted Roman origins. From Durazzo the Via Ægnatia, the continuation of the Via Appia, interrupted at Brindisi by the Adriatic, started on its course across the Balkans, to Elbasan, Ochrida, Monastir, Salonica and Constantinople, and traces of it are visible at most points of the route. As further evidence of Roman penetration, Prof. Ugolini tells that on visiting the Puka district some Italian engineers prospecting for copper showed him various small tunnels made by the Romans in their search for the same mineral.

In the course of their survey Prof. Ugolini and his assistants came upon many interesting monuments of later ages, such as the Byzantine church of the Forty Saints, whence the little port of Santi Quaranta, so famous and important during the War, but now almost forgotten, takes its name (given to it by the Venetians), the church of Mesopotamo, also Byzantine, of which a part is a building of the fourth century B.C. Venetian remains are also frequent, notably the bridges near Scutari and Tirana, and the many lions of St. Mark, of which the most curious is one of very rough native workmanship on a building at Vund in Southern Albania.

The Italian archæological mission is only at the beginning of its work, but the results already achieved are harbingers of the more important finds it expects to make in the future. Prof. Ugolini has recorded a part of his discoveries in the first volume of his *Albania antica*; two other volumes of it and one on primitive

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Albania are in preparation, and an essay on the Dea di Butrinto has been printed in the *Bollettino d'Arte* of the Italian Ministry of Education for 1928. A general summary of the archæological discoveries in Albania is contained in his interesting little volume *L'antica Albania nelle ricerche archæologiche italiane.*



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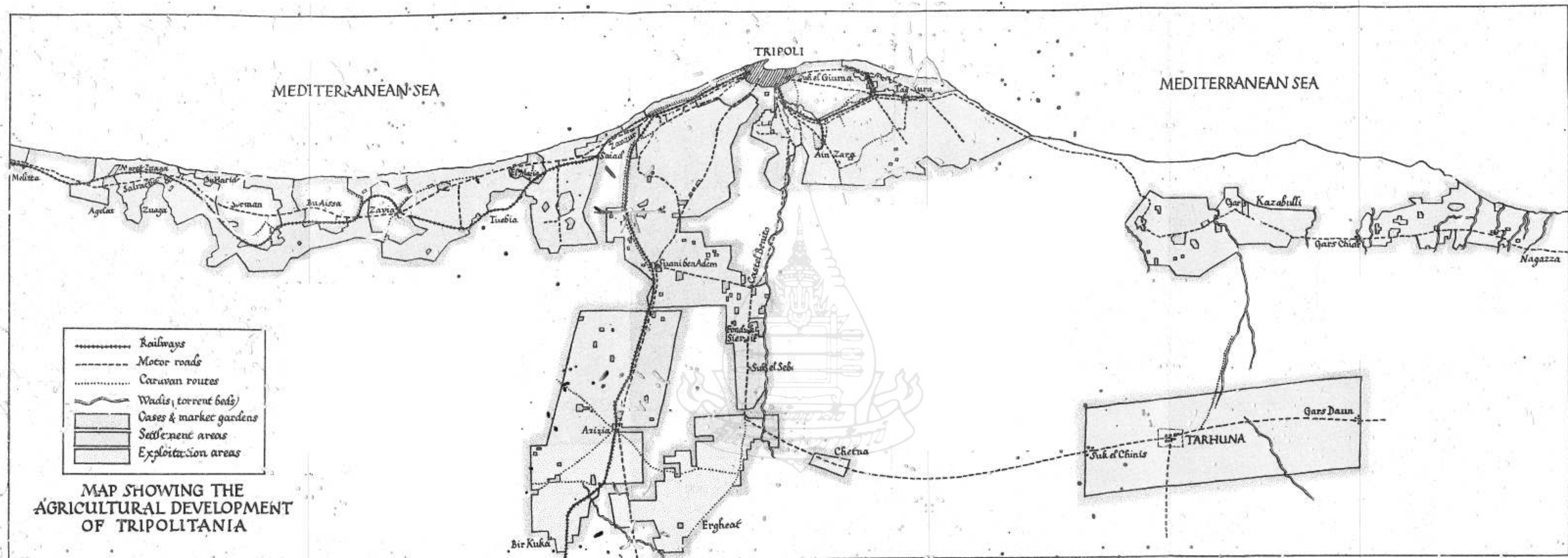
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