

Think what an importance that fact has had. The central point of Greek history for many purposes is Delphi, and a great deal of Greek history centres round the god who has there his sanctuary. How much this visible presence of Apollo must have affected his worship, and all the associations which the Ionic race had with him. What a difference it must have made when you were actually able from your own home, or when you went to the top of your own Acropolis, or sailed to the neighbouring port, to see this Parnassus, to know that hard by the cleft beneath the two peaks there was this oracle and this sacred home of the lord of light and song. That gives you an idea of the extent to which Apollo and his dwelling-place came to be a living factor in Greek history, which is not possible before you know the fact that Parnassus is in sight from almost any part of Greece.

To the north-west of Greece we find the people of the Skipetar or Albanians. They are one of the earliest races in Europe. Their language and the language of the Basques are the only two still surviving European languages whose relations with other languages it has been found very difficult to determine, although I believe that philologists are now disposed to hold that Albanian belongs to the Indo-European (or, as it is now commonly but somewhat incorrectly called, Aryan) family of tongues. Northern Albania is a country of wild and savage mountains, exceedingly bold and precipitous, and forming a sort of knot at the head of the upper valleys of the Drin and Vardar. When you sail across the Lake of Skodra (Scutari), and see this splendid mass of rocky mountains towering above the smooth lake bosom on the east, deep gorges below, and patches of snow on the summits even in mid-summer, you begin to understand

why the Albanians should have remained a distinct people, preserving their ancient tongue and their primitive usages, many of them singularly like those recorded in Homer. It is a remarkable fact that to the south and south-east of the city of Skodra, for seventy or eighty miles, scarcely any remains of buildings, roads, or bridges have been found that point to Roman occupation; and yet this country was for many centuries an integral part of the Roman Empire. The conclusion is that the Romans did not trouble themselves to civilize it; they left the tribes to their own independence. That independence they have in substance retained ever since. Even in the less difficult regions of Southern Albania Ali Pasha ruled as a sovereign at Janina, and the tribes of the northern mountains are the most troublesome of all the nominal subjects of the Sultan in Europe, a standing menace to the peace of those countries.

Montenegro is an extremely curious instance of the way in which favourable geographical conditions may aid a small people to achieve a fame and a place in the world quite out of proportion to their numbers. The Black Mountain is the one place where a South Slavonic community maintained themselves in independence, sometimes seeing their territory overrun by the Turks, but never acknowledging Turkish authority *de jure* from the time of the Turkish Conquest of the fifteenth century down to the Treaty of Berlin. Montenegro could not have done that but for her geographical structure. She is a high mass of limestone: you cannot call it a plateau, because it is seamed by many valleys, and rises into many sharp mountain-peaks. Still, it is a mountain mass, the average height of which is rather more than 2,000 feet above the sea with summits reaching 5,000. It is bare limestone, so that