FIIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY BOOK
OF THE
ALBANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
IN AMERICA

1908 - 1958

Compiled by
METROPOLITAN FAN S. NOLI, MUS. B., Ph.D.

Published by the
Albanian Orthodox Church in America
Boston, Massachusetts
1960
THIS ANNIVERSARY BOOK
IS GRATEFULLY DEDICATED
TO THE THREE
GREAT RUSSIAN MISSIONARIES
METROPOLITAN PLATON ROZHDESTVENSKY
ARCHPRIEST ALEXANDER HOTOVITZKY
MITRED ARCHPRIEST JACOB E. GRIGORIEFF
WHO HELPED US FOUND
THE ALBANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
IN AMERICA
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METROPOLITAN FAN S. NOLI
IN MEMORY OF

THOMAS WOODROW WILSON
1856 - 1924

TWENTY-EIGHTH PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES
1913 - 1921

A GREAT AMERICAN AND A
GREAT FRIEND OF SMALL NATIONS
WHO SAVED ALBANIA FROM PARTITION
AT THE END OF THE FIRST WORLD WAR
BY DENOUNCING THE SECRET TREATY
OF LONDON, 1915

AND BY FOUNDOING THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS
WHICH REAFFIRMED THE INDEPENDENCE
OF ALBANIA
IN MEMORY OF

THE GREAT MISSIONARY HIERARCHS

ARCHBISHOP NICOLAI ZIOROV
1851 - 1915

Patriarch Tikhon Bellavin
1865 - 1925

Metropolitan Platon Rozhdestvensky
1866 - 1934

Metropolitan Theophilus Pashkovsky
1874 - 1950

Who built the

Russian Orthodox Church in America

Of which

The Albanian Orthodox Church in America

Is a daughter

And who have laid the foundations

Of the American Orthodox Church

Of the future
IN MEMORY OF
THE DECEASED CLERGYMEN
OF THE
ALBANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

Metropolitan Christopher Kissi
Metropolitan Hierotheos Andon Yaho
Metropolitan Vissarion Juvani
Bishop Agathangel Chamche
Archimandrite Thimi Theodos
Archimandrite Haralam3 Chalamani
Mitred Archpriest Jaco3 Gjigori3eff
Mitred Archpriest Vassil Malco
Archpriest Dhosi Katundi
Archpriest Nicholas Reho3a
Archpriest Vani Chani
Archpriest Nicholas Christopher
Ikonom Vangel Lubonia
Ikonom Anastas Soti3
Ikonom Sotir Tolkuchi
Ikonom Lambi Flok3
Sakellar Nicholas Nickollaus
Reverend Christo Negovani
Reverend Stathi Melani
Reverend Mark Kondili
Reverend Naum Cere
Reverend Pando Sinitsa
Reverend Pandeli Checho
Reverend Damian Angeli
Reverend Vassil Mandi
Reverend Petro Chala
Reverend George Suli
IN MEMORY
OF THE MARTYRS
OF THE
ALBANIAN RENAISSANCE

REV K. NEGOVANI
REV S. MEJANI
COLONEL THOMPSON
COLONELTSURI
CAPTAINRIZA CERROVA
KOTTO HOGI
NAUM VEKILHARGI
PETRO NINI LURASI
ANESTI KULLURIOTI
AVNI RUSTEM
KAZIM KOTSULI
LUIGI GURAKUKI
ISSA BOLETIN
THEMISTOKLI GERMENI
SPIRO KOSTURI
KOZMA TREBICKA
GANIBUTKA
KIAMIL PANARITI
VASIL TROMARA
HAKLINA
IN MEMORY OF
THE PIONEERS AND FRIENDS
OF THE
ALBANIAN RENAISSANCE

ISMAIL KEMAL
ABDUL FRASHERI
SAMi FRASHERI
NAIM FRASHERI
KOSTANDIN KRISTOFORIDI
EFTHIM MITRO
NIKOLLA NACHO
JANI VRETO
VASSO PASHA SHKODRA
FAIK KONITZA
ANDON CHAKO CHAYUPI
SOTIR PETSI
SHAHIN KOLONIA
KRISTO LUARASI
PROFESSOR NORBERT JOKL
LADY ALMINA CARNARVON
AUBREY HERBERT
EDITH DURHAM
HENRY NOEL BRAILSFORD
Mehmed Konitza
Vani Cico Kosturi
SPIRO BELKAMENI
DR. MIHAIL TURTULLI
CHRISTO DAKO
KOSTA CHEKREZI
THANAS TASHKO
JOHN VRUHO
SPIRO DINE
GERASIM KIRIAZi
REVEREND GEORGE FISHTA
In Memory Of

ELIAS MITCHELL'S SONS — JOSEPH, GEORGE and THEODORE
PREFACE

This book contains:

1. The story of the Albanian Orthodox Church. Though short, it is the most comprehensive review ever written on the subject. It could serve as an outline for further amplification in the future.

2. A biography of Metropolitan Noli. The size of the book did not allow a complete biography. Therefore, the latter is more or less detailed from 1882 to 1908, the year of Fan Noli's ordination, because very little is generally known about his background. It is rather sketchy after 1908. Very probably this gap will be filled in the future. On the other hand, a complete list of Fan Noli's books is given here for the first time.

3. The story of the local Churches of the Albanian Orthodox Diocese in America.

4. A large collection of photographs of clergymen and laymen who have played a part in the history of our Church.

5. A list of biographies of clergymen and laymen who, directly or indirectly, contributed to the cause of the Albanian Church Renaissance.

This book was due for publication in 1958, on the Fiftieth Anniversary of the founding of the Albanian Orthodox Church in America. It was delayed because the compilation and collection of this diverse material took more than two years. We humbly apologize for the delay.

The Compiler

Boston, Mass.
December 19, 1959
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HISTORICAL REVIEW
OF THE
ALBANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH
FROM ST. PAUL TO SCANDERBEG

St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, chapter 15, verse 19 says: "I have successfully preached the Gospel of Christ all around from Jerusalem to Illyricum." Again in his Epistle to Titus, chapter 3, verse 12, St. Paul says: "When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, do your best to come and meet me at Nicopolis, for there I have decided to spend the winter." These two passages have been interpreted by St. Jerome, the first translator of the Bible into Latin, as meaning that St. Paul visited Illyria and was the first to preach the Gospel to the Illyrians, the forefathers of the Albanians.

Farlati, the famous Jesuit scholar, who wrote the ecclesiastical history of Illyria in seven monumental volumes, agrees with St. Jerome about St. Paul's missionary work in Illyria. Moreover, he adds that St. Paul during his Illyrian journey visited Durazzo on the Adriatic Sea. Konitza, in his book "Albania: the Rock Garden of Southeastern Europe," tells us that there is documentary evidence of the existence of a Christian community at Durazzo in 58 A.D. in the time of Nero. In the Roman Catholic Martyrology we find the name of St. Astio, Bishop of Durazzo, in the Second Century A.D. Moreover, it is on record that several bishops of Albania represented their dioceses in the First Ecumenical Council of Nicea in 325 A.D.
Originally Albania was under the jurisdiction of the Popes. During that period Roman Catholic Missionaries continued the work of St. Paul in Albania. That explains why all the ecclesiastical terms in Albanian are derived from Latin. For instance, Albanian *mesha* from Latin *missam*; *shent* from *sanctum*; *altari* from *altarem*; *kreshma* from *quadragesimam*; *Kershendellat* from *Christi Natalia*; *Rushayet* (Pentecost) from *Rosalia*; *krüqi* from *crucem*. These are only a few examples.

As a part of Illyricum Albania belonged to the Roman See until Leo III the Isaurian, Emperor of Byzantium, detached it from Rome in 732 A.D. and gave it to the Patriarchate of Constantinople. This was his answer to Pope Gregory III, who had excommunicated him as an heretical iconoclast. Subsequently the Bulgarians and the Serbians drove a wedge through Macedonia to Salonica, and prevented the Greek Patriarchate from ever getting a firm hold on Albania.

The Crusaders, the Venetians, and the Neapolitans undid almost entirely all the gains the Greek Patriarchs had made, which consisted of three Greek Orthodox wedges: one from Prizren to Shkodra and Antivari in the North; a second from Ochrida to Croya and Durazzo; and a third from Janina to Ginokastr and Valona in the South. But these wedges were rather weak and were slowly driven back or altogether obliterated. In the early XV Century Albania was preponderantly Catholic, with eighteen episcopal Sees of the Latin rite, some of which have an uninterrupted history from the dawn of Christendom down to our own day.

We have documentary evidence which gives us the dates when the most influential Albanian Princes became Catholic: the Thopias of Croya are mentioned as Catholics
in 1208; the Musachis and Aranitis of Central Albania in 1318; the Zanabissis of Ginokastrra and the Shpatas of Arta in 1354; the Balshas of Shkodra in 1369; the Dukaginis in 1400; the Kastriotis in 1407.

Some of these Princes and bishops were Catholics of the Latin rite and some of them were Catholics of the Byzantine rite, or Uniats. For instance, Milan Shufflay, the Croatian scholar, states in the *Illyrisch-Albanische Forschungen* that during the reign of the Anjou dynasty (1272-1368) there were two Archbishops in Durazzo, one of the Latin rite and one of the Byzantine. We know that Bishop Stephen of Croya belonged to the Byzantine rite because he signed his name in Greek to a treaty between Scanderbeg and Alphonse V of Naples in 1451. Moreover, according to a document discovered by the Romanian historian, Marinesco, Father Helia, Chaplain of the Neapolitan contingent stationed at Croya, the capital of Scanderbeg, complains that he could not find in that city a deacon who could read Latin and assist him in his services. That means that all the clergymen of Croya were Eastern Orthodox and could read Greek but not Latin. It means also that the Kastriotis of Croya, including Scanderbeg, were Catholics of the Byzantine rite, not of the Latin rite.

**TURKISH PERIOD**

After the conquest of Albania by the Turks, it was only natural that the Catholics of the Byzantine rite, or Uniats, should join the Patriarchate of Constantinople. The Sultans of Turkey were at war with the Popes of Rome and favored the Patriarchs of Constantinople. At the end of the XIX century about 70% of the Albanian population were Moslem, 20% were Eastern Orthodox, mostly in
Southern Albania, and 10% were Roman Catholic, mostly in the North.

During the Turkish rule (1478-1912) there were five Eastern Orthodox Dioceses in Albania, namely those of Prizren, Durazzo, Berat, Korcha, and Ginokasta. All the bishops of these dioceses had the ancient title of Metropolitan. With the exception of the Metropolitan of Prizren, who was usually a Serbian after the middle of the XIX century, all the other Metropolitans were Greeks. As such they considered it their duty to hellenize the Orthodox Albanians under their jurisdiction and turn them into Greek patriots. To this end they used their Greek churches and Greek schools, which were the only ones allowed for Orthodox Albanians in Turkey. They excommunicated every Orthodox communicant who dared to call himself Albanian or read Albanian books. They thought that even assassination was a legitimate weapon to hellenize Southern Albania and annex it to Greece. The excommunication of Vani Kosturi of Korcha and the murder of the Rev. Father Christo Negovani in 1905 are two well known examples of their policy.

On the other hand, the Turks used their Moslem mosques and their Turkish schools to turn the Moslem Albanians into Turks.

The Roman Catholics of the North had four bishops and two Metropolitan Archbishops, one in Shkodra and another in Durazzo. They were the only ones who were allowed to preach in Albanian in their churches and teach the Albanian language in their parish schools. They could do it because they enjoyed the protection of the Austrian Empire and the other Catholic powers of Europe.

The conditions mentioned above prevailed when Fan Noli was ordained as priest by Metropolitan Platon in
New York in 1908 and started his Albanian mission in Boston as a branch of the Russian Church in America. His program was, first, to preach in a language the people could understand, that is to say to use Albanian instead of Greek in churches consisting of Albanian congregations; second, to have Albanian priests and bishops instead of Greek priests and bishops who were political agents of a foreign government; third, to found an Autocephalous Church in Albania.

This emancipation from the Patriarch of Constantinople was absolutely necessary because the latter was the political as well as the religious leader of the Greeks under Turkish rule. As such the Patriarch of Constantinople enjoyed some sovereign prerogatives from the conquest of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 until 1923. In that year the Greeks were expelled from Turkey by Mustafa Kemal, with the exception of about 100,000 Greeks in the city of Constantinople.

The prerogatives enjoyed by the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople were the following: He was recognized as the official ethnarch, that is to say the national leader of all the Orthodox Christians of the Turkish Empire, called Roum by the Turks. It did not matter whether they were Arabic-speaking Syrians, Turkish-speaking Caramanians, Greeks, Albanians, Bulgarians, Serbians, or Romanians.

The Greek Patriarch had the right to veto the establishment of any non-Greek Orthodox church in the Turkish Empire. The Patriarch was the Minister of Education for all the Orthodox nationalities. He had the exclusive right to run all these Greek schools and the right to veto the establishment of any non-Greek school for Orthodox children. He had the exclusive right of marrying and divorcing Orthodox communicants. The Patriarchate also
acted as a Probate Court, as it had the exclusive right to
draft, record, and execute the wills of the Orthodox. The
Patriarchate had the right to collect church taxes from its
communicants for the support of the Orthodox clergy.
Moreover, tax delinquents or evaders were forced by the
Turkish government to pay the arrears or suffer the
consequences. As a matter of fact, the Patriarchate of
Constantinople was a Greek state within a Turkish state.

Of course, the Greek Patriarch used these sovereign
prerogatives to further the Greek cause. To him Orthodoxy
was only a political weapon which he used ruthlessly
against all non-Greek Orthodox races. To him Orthodox
meant Greek.

The Turks had a reason for giving these far-reaching
prerogatives to the Patriarch. They wanted to keep down
all the Orthodox subject races through him. They were
very successful in this respect until the early XIX century.
But then the French Revolution popularized the theory
and practice of a state based on a nation with the same
culture and language throughout, not on a religion or a
monarch. Subsequently, all the subject races of the Turkish
Empire, one after the other, got rid of both the Sultan of
Turkey and the Patriarch of Constantinople by creating
independent states—self-governing autocephalous
churches of their own. The Albanians followed the example
of their neighbors.
RUSSIAN BACKGROUND

After the fall of Constantinople in 1453 Moscow became the capital of the Eastern Orthodox world. The Church of Russia practically took the place of the Byzantine Mother Church. The Russians did a vast missionary work within their empire as well as in the neighboring countries both in Europe and Asia. Their missionaries were the first of their denomination to appear in the New World.

ALASKAN PERIOD. Alaska was Christianized by the Russians, since it belonged to the Russian Empire until it was bought by the United States in 1867. In 1794 the first Russian Church was built on Kodiak Island, Alaska, by Russian monks from the Uussi Vaalamo Monastery of Northern Finland. One of these missionaries was the saintly hermit, Father Herman, who died on December 13, 1837.

The first Eastern Orthodox Bishop of Alaska appointed by the Church of Russia was Joasaph Bolotov. He and two missionaries who accompanied him were lost at sea on their way to Alaska in 1828. He was succeeded by Bishop Innokenty Veniaminov, the Apostle of Alaska. He translated the Liturgical books into Aleutian. He built the Cathedral of St. Michael in Sitka, which is still serving as the episcopal see of the Russian Mission in Alaska. Later, he became Metropolitan of Moscow, and served there from 1867 until his death in 1879.

SAN FRANCISCO PERIOD. In 1872 Bishop John Metropolisky of Alaska (1872-1879), a graduate of the
Moscow Theological Academy, transferred the bishop's see from Sitka to San Francisco. He was succeeded as Bishop of San Francisco by Bishop Nestor Zakkis, 1880-1882, Bishop Vladimir Sokolovsky, 1882-1891, and Bishop Nicolai Ziorov, 1891-1898, who later became Archbishop of Warsaw. It was Bishop Nicolai Ziorov who read the manuscript of Miss Isabel Hapgood's Service Book in English and urged her to publish it by all means.

In 1898 Bishop Tikhon, born Vassily Ivanovich Bellavin, who later became Patriarch of Moscow, succeeded Ziorov. In 1904 he consecrated Archimandrite Raphael, head of the Syrian Orthodox Mission, as Suffragan Bishop of Brooklyn. In the same year he published the Eastern Orthodox Catechism in English, the first of its kind in the United States.

NEW YORK PERIOD. In 1870 Father Nicolai Bierrning, a Danish Roman Catholic convert, conducted the first liturgy in English in the "Greek Russian Chapel" at 941 Second Avenue. He used an English translation by Professor Haviary of Vienna. He also published the first American Orthodox magazine, "The Oriental Church Magazine." In 1903 Father Alexander Hotovitzky, a dynamic Russian missionary, raised funds and built the Russian Cathedral of St. Nicholas at 15 East 97th Street, New York City. Later he became Dean of this Cathedral which he had brought into existence. He is rightly referred to as the "Builder of the Cathedral."

In 1905 Bishop Tikhon was appointed Archbishop of North America and transferred his see from San Francisco to New York City. In 1906 he published Miss Isabel Hapgood's Service Book containing the principal services of the Eastern Orthodox Church in English, the first book
RUSSIAN BACKGROUND

of its kind in the United States. Again it was Father Alexander Hotovitzky who raised the money to pay for this publication. In the same year Archbishop Tikhon ordained as priest Ingram N.W. Irvine, an Episcopalian convert, and authorized him to conduct services in English.

In 1907 Archbishop Tikhon left for Russia. He was succeeded by Archbishop Platon Rozhdestvensky, who arrived in New York on September 18th of the same year. In 1908 Archbishop Platon, at the recommendation of Father Alexander Hotovitzky and Father Jacob Grigorieff, ordained Fan Noli as priest in the Cathedral of St. Nicholas, 15 East 97th Street, New York City, and authorized him to conduct services in Albanian. In 1912 he transferred the Theological Seminary from Minneapolis, Minnesota to Tenafly, New Jersey. In 1917 he was elevated to the rank of Metropolitan of Odessa, and in 1924 he became the ruling Metropolitan of the Russian Orthodox Church in North America, which was proclaimed autonomous by an all-American Sobor in Detroit, Michigan. In 1934 Metropolitan Platon passed on. He was succeeded by Metropolitan Theophilus Pashkovsky. It was Theophilus who transferred the Theological Academy from Tenafly, New Jersey to New York City in 1938. This school, St. Vladimir's Seminary, was the first Eastern Orthodox Theological Seminary to train English-speaking priests. Metropolitan Leonty, successor of Theophilus, is now the President of this Seminary, the only one of its kind in the United States.

ALBANIAN PERIOD

On November 28, 1912, Albania was declared independent through a proclamation issued by Ismail Kemal, who raised the Albanian flag in Valona. It was the ancient
flag with the black double-headed eagle in a red field, used in the XV century by Scanderbeg, the national hero of Albania.

On April 28, 1921, Archimandrite Vangel Chamche and Rev. Fr. Vasil Marko, missionaries of the Albanian Orthodox Church in America, conducted the first Albanian Liturgy in the Cathedral of St. George, Korcha, Southeast Albania.

On August 10 of the same year Metropolitan Iakovos, the last Greek bishop in Albania, was expelled from Albania by order of the government under pressure from the people, who could not stand Greek political agitators under religious camouflage.

In August 1922, representatives of all the Orthodox dioceses and local churches of Albania held a congress in Berat. They passed a unanimous resolution: First, that the Orthodox Church of Albania should become autocephalous, that is to say self-governing, like all the other Churches of the Balkan states; second, that the metropolitans of the Albanian dioceses should be Albanian citizens consecrated by the Patriarch of Constantinople; third, that the Albanian language should be used in all church services.

A delegation headed by Rev. Vasil Marko, formerly of St. Louis, Missouri, whom we have mentioned before, was sent to Constantinople to transmit to the Patriarch the resolutions passed by the Congress of Berat. In answer to these resolutions the Patriarch of Constantinople appointed Hierotheos Andon Yaho, Bishop of Miletoupolis, as his Plenipotentiary Exarch to study the situation on the spot and to take all the steps necessary to carry out the resolutions of the Berat Congress.

Hierotheos, accompanied by Christopher Kissi, Bishop of Synadon, arrived at Korcha in the fall of 1923. They
immediately proceeded to the consecration of Fan Noli, which took place on November 21, 1923 in the Cathedral of St. George, Korcha, Southern Albania. After Fan Noli’s consecration, Hierotheos, the Plenipotentiary Exarch of the Patriarch of Constantinople, appointed the following metropolitans to the dioceses of Albania: Hierotheos, Metropolitan of the Diocese of Korcha and acting Metropolitan of the Diocese of Ginokastra; Christopher Kissi, Metropolitan of the Diocese of Berat, which included Valona; Fan Noli, Metropolitan of the Diocese of Durazzo, which included Tirana, the capital of Albania.

Fan Noli pointed out that the income of the Diocese of Durazzo was not adequate even for a church janitor to live on, much less for a Metropolitan. Hierotheos answered solemnly that the title of Metropolitan of Durazzo was the highest in rank in all Albania, and that Fan Noli’s friends in America would take care of his salary. He added that the income from the Dioceses of Korcha and Ginokastra, as well as the income from the Diocese of Berat, would be inadequate to provide decent salaries for himself and for Christopher Kissi. He stressed the fact that those incomes now depended on voluntary contributions from Orthodox communicants and not on church taxes. It was a well-known fact that the government of Albania would not collect the church taxes by force, as the Turkish government used to do in the good old days.

Fan Noli accepted the big title with the small salary. After all, the title was imposing enough to compensate for the financial shortage. Metropolitan Archbishops of Durazzo represented their Diocese in all the Ecumenical Councils of the Orthodox Church and they were usually members, or substitute members, of the Holy Synod of the Patriarchate of Constantinople. Millions could not buy the
great ecclesiastical prestige that went with this historical title. In comparison the titles of the Metropolitans of the other Albanian dioceses were insignificant.

This was the first Synod of Albanian bishops since the conquest of Albania by the Turks in 1478. Unfortunately, this Synod was short-lived. A year after it was formed, on December 24, 1924 to be exact, Fan Noli left Albania and returned to America, where he resumed his duties as Primate of the Albanian Orthodox Church in America.

After Fan Noli's departure, Hierotheos was invited by the Albanian government to fill up the vacancies of the dioceses and reorganize the Synod of Albanian bishops. His list of bishops-elect was not acceptable to the Albanian government. The latter suspected that some of the proposed bishops were too pro-Greek to be trusted. On the other hand, the government's list of eligible bishops-elect was not acceptable to Hierotheos. He felt that they were political favorites, who were not qualified for episcopal consecration. Thereupon the government told him that his mission as Plenipotentiary Exarch of the Patriarch of Constantinople was at an end, and he was ordered to leave Albania. Hierotheos left for Mt. Athos in 1929. He died in a hospital in Salonica in 1956.

The departure of Hierotheos left Christopher Kissi as the only Orthodox bishop in Albania. He had exactly the same experience that Hierotheos had. He could not agree with the government as to a list of eligible bishops. Again the Albanian government pointed out to him that his mission as an envoy of the Patriarch of Constantinople was ended and that he should leave the country. Christopher answered that he had no place to go. He petitioned the government to allow him to retire to one of the thirty odd monasteries of the country. His request was granted. He
METROPOLITAN VISSARION (3) with other METROPOLITANS in Belgrade, Jugoslavia.
retired to the Monastery of Ardenitza, between Berat and Valona, where he lived in retirement for about eleven years. He spent his time meditating on the vanity of human life and experimenting in a chemical laboratory, as chemistry was his lifelong hobby.

At this time Vissarion Juvani appeared on the scene. As a validly ordained Archimandrite, he was eligible for Bishop and he was politically acceptable to the government. As a matter of fact, one reason why the governmental list of eligible bishops had been rejected by both Hierotheos and Christopher was the fact that Vissarion headed that list. At any rate the government asked him to reorganize the Church and to form a second Synod of Albanian bishops under his leadership. He did it. In 1929 he was consecrated as bishop by hierarchs of Metropolitan Anastassy's Russian Synod in Exile in Karlovatz, Yugoslavia. After his consecration, Vissarion returned to Tirana and, along with Victor, the Serbian Bishop of Shkodra, consecrated two other bishops, Euthymius Econom and Agathangel, formerly Archimandrite Vangel Chamche of Jamestown, New York.

The Second Synod of Albanian Bishops was constituted as follows: Vissarion Juvani, Metropolitan of Durazzo and Tirana, Archbishop of all Albania, and President of the Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Church of Albania; Victor, Bishop of Shkodra; Agathangel, Bishop of Berat; Euthymius, Bishop of Korcha. As it will be noted, only one of these hierarchs had the title of Metropolitan, the Primate Vissarion Juvani. All the others had only the title of Bishop. This same rule has been followed by the Church of Albania ever since.

The Patriarch of Constantinople immediately denounced the Autocephalous Church of Albania headed by
Vissarion as uncanonical. He also excommunicated all the bishops who took part in the Second Synod and declared their consecrations invalid. The denunciation and the excommunication of the Patriarch of Constantinople did not change the situation at all. The Holy Synod, presided over by Vissarion Juvani, ruled the Church of Albania for seven years, from 1929 to 1936.

In 1936 the second Synod disintegrated. Victor, the Serbian Bishop of Shkodra, was dismissed by Vissarion and was consequently asked by the Albanian government to leave Albania, which he did shortly afterward. Euthymius, Bishop of Korcha, passed on at about the same time. Agathangel, Bishop of Berat, declared that he could no longer co-operate with Vissarion.

True, Vissarion was one of the most energetic bishops Albania has ever had. He was the first one to organize the Church of Albania as an Albanian Church. He did more than his share to Albanize the Church, which was practically Greek until Albania became independent in 1912. He proved conclusively that he could organize the Autocephalous Church of Albania and run it for seven years without the recognition of the Patriarch of Constantinople. As we shall see later, Vissarion forced the Patriarch to recognize an accomplished fact. Unfortunately, Vissarion was very difficult to get along with. So he was asked to resign by the representatives of all the Albanian Dioceses, as well as by the Albanian government. He did resign in 1936 and had been living in retirement ever since until his death in 1959.

Then Christopher Kissi, who only a few weeks before had been appointed acting Bishop of Korcha, was asked to become the Primate of the Church of Albania and to organize its Third Synod of Bishops. In 1937 he went to
RUSSIAN BACKGROUND

Constantinople at the head of a delegation and applied to the Patriarchate for the official recognition of the Church of Albania as autocephalous. His mission was successful. The Patriarch of Constantinople recognized the Albanian Church as autocephalous on April 12, 1937.

This historical decree of recognition was signed by Patriarch Benjamin of Constantinople and the following Metropolitanans, members of his Holy Synod: Maximos of Chalcedon, Joachim of Derkon, Polycarpos of Brussa, Thomas of Prinkiponisso, Germanos of Sardis and Pissidia, Gennadios of Helioupolis and Theiron, Leontios of Theodoroupolis, Constantinos of Irinoupolis, Meletios of Khristoupolis, Dorotheos of Laodicea, and Germanos of Enos. On the same day Christopher Kissi was appointed as the Metropolitan of Durazzo and Tirana, Archbishop of All Albania, and President of the Holy Synod of the Autocephalous Church of Albania. Christopher Kissi was the first to have that title in the history of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

His Synod consisted of the following members: Christopher Kissi, Metropolitan of Durazzo and Tirana, President; Agathangel Chamche, Bishop of Berat; Evlogi Kurillo, Bishop of Korcha; and Pandelimon Kotoku, Bishop of Ginokastr. Again, according to the precedent established by Vissarion, only the ruling Archbishop, Christopher, enjoyed the title of Metropolitan.

Vissarion Juvani was not a member of this Synod because one of the conditions of the Patriarch of Constantinople for recognition of the Church of Albania as autocephalous was that Vissarion should be demoted to the rank of bishop and retire from church activity for the rest of his life. This condition proves how much the
Patriarch of Constantinople hated the man who forced him
to issue the decree of recognition.

Soon afterward, Bishop Evlogi of Korcha and Bishop
Pandelimon of Ginokastra, who made no secret of their
pro-Greek sympathies, left for Greece where they belonged.
Bishop Agathangel Chamche died in 1946. Metropolitan
Archbishop Christopher Kissi resigned in 1949, probably
for reasons of health, because he had been a very sick man
since 1923. After that he lived in retirement for some time
in the Monastery of Ardenitza, and later on in the
Monastery of St. Procopius near Tirana. He died of a
cerebral hemorrhage on June 16, 1958. It is largely to
the credit of Christopher Kissi that the Patriarchate of
Constantinople recognized the Church of Albania as
autocephalous. He was persona grata to everybody con-
cerned, the Patriarch of Constantinople, the government of
Albania, and the Orthodox clergy and population under
his jurisdiction.

Christopher Kissi was succeeded by Paisi Voditza, who
organized the present Synod of Albania on August 25,
1949, with the following members: Paisi Voditza, Metro-
politan of Durazzo and Tirana, Archbishop of All Albania,
President; Kirill Naslazi, Bishop of Berat; Fillothe Duni,
Bishop of Korcha; Damian Kokoneshi, Bishop of Gin-
okastra; Sofron Borova, Suffragan Bishop attached to the
Holy Synod.

Immediately after his appointment as Metropolitan
Archbishop of Albania, Paisi sent to the Orthodox
Patriarchs and to the Metropolitan Archbishops of the
Orthodox Autocephalous Churches the usual letter notify-
ing them of his election. He received replies from all of
them, with one exception. That was the Patriarch of
Constantinople. The latter claimed that Christopher Kissi was deposed uncanonically and therefore the Patriarch refused to recognize Paisi Voditza as the canonical successor of Christopher Kissi.

As usual, the real reasons for this attitude of the Greek Patriarch of Constantinople are purely political. These are the facts: On Good Friday, 1939, Italian armies occupied Albania and overthrew the government of King Zog. Immediately after the occupation the Italian dictator, Mussolini, annexed Albania, proclaimed Victor Emmanuel III, who was King of Italy, as King of Albania also, and imposed on Albania the puppet government of the pro-Italian Shefket Verlatsi. Later on, when Mussolini declared war on Greece, he forced the Albanian puppet government of Shefket Verlatsi to declare war on Greece also.

At the end of the World War II, Greece concluded peace with Italy but declared that she would conclude peace with Albania only on one condition, that Southern Albania should be ceded to Greece. Naturally, that condition was unacceptable to the Albanian government. Therefore, Greece considers herself still at war with Albania, fifteen years after the end of the second World War.

Everybody knows that it was Mussolini who declared war against Greece in the name of Albania, and not an Albanian government representing the people of Albania, since there was no Albanian government at that time. But it suits Greece to use that argument for political reasons, to further her claims on Southern Albania. At any rate, since Greece is at war with Albania, the Patriarch of Constantinople, who is only an agent of the Greek government, is bound to be at war with Albania and the
Albanian Church also. Canon law is merely a convenient camouflage for the Patriarch of Constantinople. The real reason for his non-recognition of Paisi Voditza is purely Greek politics.

The most ironical incident of the war of the Patriarchate of Constantinople against the Church of Albania is the following: When Christopher Kissi died, the Patriarch of Constantinople announced to the world that now there was only one Orthodox bishop left in Albania: It was Vissarion Juvani, whom the Patriarch had demoted from the rank of Metropolitan Archbishop to the rank of bishop and compelled to retire for life!

The Greek Patriarchate of Constantinople is not only at war with the Church of Albania. It is also at war with the Albanian Orthodox Church in America. That is why the Patriarchate sent Mark Lipa, Titular Bishop of Lefki, to the United States in 1949. His mission is to destroy the Albanian Orthodox Church in America and annex its Churches. His claim that he is of Albanian descent does not change the situation at all. This is not a question of his racial descent. It is a question of the ecclesiastical authority which he is serving and the character of his mission. We all know that he is serving the Greek Patriarchate of Constantinople, and his mission is to bring the Orthodox Albanians of America under the jurisdiction of that hostile Greek agency. That makes him a Greek bishop, no matter what his descent may be. Of course, his job is Don Quixotic and hopeless. He cannot turn back the wheel of history.
ALBANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

The Albanian Orthodox Church in America started in 1908 as a missionary church under the jurisdiction of the Russian Orthodox Church. It was organized as an independent diocese in 1919, and it has been an independent branch of the Eastern Orthodox Church ever since. It is in intercommunion with all the Eastern Orthodox Churches, both in the United States and abroad, but it is not under the jurisdiction of any one of them. It is completely self-governing.

On various occasions the Conventions of the Albanian Orthodox Church in America have discussed the question of joining the Autocephalous Church of Albania. They reached the conclusion that political conditions beyond their control made such a union impossible. Moreover, they think that even if the international situation improves, it would not be advisable to place this diocese under the jurisdiction of a Mother Church outside the United States. They believe that, according to the Eastern Orthodox tradition, there should be an independent Orthodox Church in every independent country. Therefore, there should be an American Orthodox Patriarchate, consisting of all the Orthodox groups in this country. Whenever such a Patriarchate is organized, the Albanian Orthodox Church in America will be glad to become a part of it, along with the other Orthodox groups.

The Albanian Orthodox Church in America is organized as a diocese, with headquarters in Boston, Massachusetts. The following Churches are under its jurisdiction: St. George Cathedral, Boston, Massachusetts;
Clergymen of the Diocese. Seated, left to right: VERY REV. H. V. DODE, ARCHIMANDRITE C. NONI, METROPOLITAN NOLI, MIFRED ARCHPRIEST C. BELBA, VERY REV. C. E. ELLIS. Standing: REV. SOTIR DIOLOGKA, VERY REV. CHRISTO COSTA, REV. STEPHEN LASKO, VERY REV. SOKRAT SOTER, REV. MINA PRIFTI, REV. VASIL GEORGE.
Delegates of the Convention, 1958. Seated, left to right: ELIAS MITCHELL, Treasurer, PETER THOMAS, ANTHONY ATHANAS, Chairman. METROPOLITAN NOLL, GARY RISKA, Lay Chairman, PANDI LUBONIA, COSTA MANGELLI, GREGORY TITE, Standing, left to right: PETER KONARY, GEORGE JARRAS, PETER VANGEL, JAMES VISO, GEORGE KTONA, SOTIR ADAMS, SERGE GRAN- DONI, VICTOR CHACHO, LOUIS PANDO, GAVRIL TEROVA, KOSTA KOCHI, EVANS LIOLEN, STEVE PELLICONE, LOUIS SPERO.
St. John the Divine, Boston, Massachusetts; St. Mary's Annunciation, Natick, Massachusetts; St. Mary's Assumption, Worcester, Massachusetts; St. Nicholas, Southbridge, Massachusetts; St. George, Bridgeport, Connecticut; St. Nicholas, New York City; Christ the King, Albany, New York; SS. Peter and Paul, Rochester, New York; St. Elijah, Jamestown, New York; SS. Peter and Paul, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; St. John Chrysostom, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; St. Premte, Cleveland, Ohio; St. Thomas, Detroit, Michigan. Services are conducted both in Albanian and English.

The Diocese is governed by a Constitution, which was adopted in 1947. The local Churches are governed by a Uniform Constitution adopted in 1952. The Primate of the Diocese is Metropolitan Fan S. Noli, Ph.D. of Boston. A Convention composed of clergymen and delegates of the local churches meets every year to discuss the current problems of the Diocese. The decisions of the Convention are binding on all the local Churches.

STUDENT FUND

One of the greatest achievements of the Diocese is the Albanian American Theological Student Trust Fund. It was proposed by Evans Liolin. It was started in 1947 by a committee composed of the following members: Evans Liolin, New York City, Chairman; James Viso, also of New York City; Philip Cotmil, Bridgeport, Connecticut; and Gary Riska, Boston, Massachusetts. The first drive organized by this committee was very successful. Then the work was continued by the Diocese, which made it obligatory for every member of the local churches to contribute one dollar annually for this Fund.

The scholarships are awarded by a joint meeting of
the Diocesan Council and the Student Fund Committee. At the present time the Fund is financing the theological education of three young Albanian-Americans, namely Rev. Vasil George, Pastor of the Natick Church, who is continuing his studies at Boston University; Ernest Tsonis, of Philadelphia, Sub-Deacon, who has completed a three year course at St. Vladimir’s Orthodox Theological Seminary, and is continuing his studies at Columbia University; and James Theodos of Boston, also a Sub-Deacon, who is now in his third year at St. Vladimir’s Seminary. Moreover, Miss Florence Gure of Worcester, Massachusetts has recently been awarded a scholarship which will enable her to work for her Master’s Degree in religious education at Boston University. This is an excellent record for the Committee, which has been in existence for only a few years.

The present members of the Student Fund Committee are the following: Evans Liolin, Chairman, James Viso, Philip Cotmil, Gary Riska, Dr. Andrew Elia, Basil Gounaris, and Very Rev. C. E. Ellis. On his re-election the Chairman made the following statement:

“We have raised much money for the students — but we have also spent much. Nevertheless, we are doing all we can to encourage more young men to come forward. Student candidates for the priesthood will always be welcome.”

KNIGHTS OF ST. GEORGE

On the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Diocese, the Diocesan Council awarded the medal of the Knight of St. George to the following persons for distinguished services. The recipients are listed in the alphabetical order of their family names:

1. ANTHONY ATHANAS, for loyal support, out-
standing volunteer service, and major donations.

2. JOHN STAVRO BLUSHI, for loyal support, outstanding volunteer service, and generous donations.

3. MRS. THOMA COSTA, for loyal support, outstanding volunteer service, generous donations, and in grateful memory of her husband, THOMA COSTA, a charter member of the St. George Cathedral.

4. DR. ANDREW ELIA, for loyal support, outstanding volunteer service, and generous donations.

5. RT. REV. JACOB E. GRIGORIEFF, Mitred Archpriest of the Russian Orthodox Church, for recommending and sponsoring the ordination of the first priest of the Albanian Orthodox Church in America, for reorganizing the Choir of St. George Cathedral, and for arranging Russian Liturgical Anthems with an Albanian text.

6. JANI JANOLLARI, for loyal support, outstanding volunteer service, and generous donations.

7. MRS. PHILIP JOHN, for loyal support, outstanding volunteer service, generous donations, and in grateful memory of her husband, PHILIP JOHN, a charter member of St. George Cathedral.

8. KOLI KOBLARA, for loyal support, outstanding volunteer service, and generous donations.

9. KOLI MISHO, for loyal support, outstanding volunteer service, and generous donations.

10. ELIAS MITCHELL, for loyal support, generous donations, and record-breaking volunteer service.

11. PROFESSOR THOMAS NASSI, for loyal support, outstanding volunteer service, and for pioneer work in organizing and directing the first choirs of our Church, in Boston, Natick, Worcester and Southbridge, Massachusetts.
ALBANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

12. MRS. DHIMA PETERSON, for loyal support, outstanding volunteer service, generous donations, and in grateful memory of her husband, DHIMA PETERSON, a charter member of St. George Cathedral.

13. GARY RISKA, for loyal support, outstanding volunteer service, and generous donations.

14. PETER TASHO, for loyal support, outstanding volunteer service, and major donations.

15. RACO THEODORE, for loyal support, outstanding volunteer service, and major donations.

*** For biographical sketches of the Knights of St. George, see List of Biographies.

ANNIVERSARY BANQUET

On May 18, 1958 the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Albanian Orthodox Church in America was celebrated with a banquet at the Somerset Hotel, Boston, Massachusetts. About seven hundred guests were present, thanks to the good work of the various Anniversary Committees. There was an overflow of several hundreds. The Toastmaster of the Banquet was Dr. Andrew Elia of Boston. The principal speakers were the following: Robert Murphy, Lieutenant Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts; Gary Riska, Lay Chairman of the Diocese; Elias Mitchell, Treasurer of the Diocese and the first Knight of St. George; Christo Thanas, President of the Federation Vatra; and Metropolitan Fan S. Noli, Ph.D., Primate of the Diocese. Here is an abbreviation of his speech:

"In 1918 we started our Church movement in Boston. In 1922 the Ecclesiastical Congress of Berat, Albania, adopted all the principles we stood for. In 1937 the Patriarchate of Constantinople recognized the Church of
Albania as autocephalous. It took only 29 years to achieve this phenomenal success. Here are the factors which explain this historical triumph:

"First of all, credit is due to the United States. The Albanians could not have started this movement anywhere else, because there was no freedom of worship in the countries they lived in. They could not have financed it anywhere else, because they lived in countries in which they could not make much money. They could not have had an Albanian priest ordained for them in the countries they lived in. We did it here, because there is freedom of worship in the United States, because we had an opportunity to make money in this country, and because we found in New York a Hierarch who ordained a priest for us. I mean Archbishop Platon Rozhdestvensky, of the Russian Church.

"We had the whole-hearted support of practically all the Albanian people for our movement, whether Orthodox, Roman Catholic, or Moslem. They all knew that our Church movement was an integral part of the campaign to liberate Albania from all oppressors, whether religious or political, whether Patriarchs or Sultans.

"We had the enthusiastic support of the Albanian newspapers published at that time: "Kombi," edited by Petsi in Boston, Massachusetts; "Drita," edited by Shahin Kolonia in Sofia, Bulgaria; "Albania," published by Faik Konitza in London, England; "Dielli," published by Vatra; and all the newspapers published subsequently. We also had the unfailing support of Vatra, which was the most powerful organization of the Albanian Renaissance.

"We had the support of all the Albanian governments, no matter what their political platform was. They all thought that an Orthodox Autocephalous Church was in-
dispensable for the very existence of the Albanian state.

"Our movement succeeded because it was led by first-class missionaries. Here are some of their achievements: Archimandrite Vangel Chamche of Jamestown, N. Y., later Bishop Agathangel of Berat, and Father Vasil Marko of St. Louis, Mo., later Mitred Archpriest, organized the Congress of Berat and made the first step toward the emancipation of the Church of Albania in 1922. Vissarion Juvani, later Metropolitan Archbishop, de facto created and headed the Autocephalous Church of Albania in 1929. Christopher Kissi, later Metropolitan Archbishop, obtained the recognition of the Autocephalous Church of Albania by the Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1937. Last but not least, we had a wonderful group of missionaries who did more than their share, under the most trying circumstances, both in this country and in Albania. Time does not permit me to enumerate their names nor their achievements, but each and every one played his part nobly.

"We gave to the people something which the Patriarchate of Constantinople never gave them. We gave them the Gospel in a language they understood, in Albanian. We gave them better church music, Russian Church Music, which is one of the most precious creations of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

"Now let me tell you a few words about the strategy which accounts for our success. It was the strategy followed by Napoleon in his last campaign, the Campaign of France. He fought it with youngsters hastily recruited. He knew that any involved strategy would be rather confusing to those kids. So there was only one order given: 'En avant, mes enfants.' (Forward, my boys). With those raw recruits Napoleon won some of his most brilliant victories. We have the example of a modern leader who used that
same strategy, Mahatma Gandhi, who said: 'Give me a bunch of disciplined young men and I will liberate India.' And he did. We succeeded with that same strategy. We got the young men who made perfect soldiers for our campaign, and we won it through their elan and enthusiasm.

"May God bless all our loyal and generous friends who have helped us for over half a century to achieve this historic success. May Almighty God give us now a new crop of enthusiastic followers who will enable us to carry out the Americanization of our Church for the benefit of the younger generation, and for the Glory of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen."

LETTER FROM FATHER HOTOVITZKY

Milto Sotir-Gurra, formerly of Manchester, New Hampshire, a veteran pioneer of the Albanian Renaissance, a man of letters, and a lifelong friend of Fan Noli, was asked in 1907 to inquire whether the Russian Archbishop of New York would be willing to ordain a priest for the Orthodox Albanians. Gurra had been brought up in Odessa, Russia and spoke Russian fluently. In answer to his inquiry he received the following letter, translated from the original Russian:

RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CATHEDRAL OF ST. NICHOLAS

15 East 97 Street
New York City, N. Y.

May 8-21, 1907

Dear Mr. Gurra:

I am sorry that I have been unable to answer promptly your inquiry about the ordination of a priest for the Albanians in this country. My delay was caused by the fact that I myself could not solve the problem, because
ALBANIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH IN AMERICA

Archbishop Tikhon left for Russia and his successor has not yet arrived.

It is true that, for the time being, His Grace, Bishop Innokenty is in charge of our Diocese, but he finds it rather hard to make a decision about your request, because he is here only temporarily, and has to leave for Alaska in the near future.

Personally, I would advise you to send to New York the candidate whom the Albanians have chosen for the priesthood. You write me that he does not speak Russian, but perhaps he speaks English, and we have plenty of people in the Cathedral who speak that language. If your Candidate does not speak English he must come here with one of his fellow-countrymen who could interpret for him and help us to examine him to see whether he is duly qualified for this religious mission. We have to make sure about these basic requirements in order to avoid future embarrassments.

We understand thoroughly the difficult situation of your fellow-countrymen in this respect. But time will help you to solve your problem. We hope that God will help you in your efforts to found a national church and to use your own language in divine services.

Please write me what is your decision and what you are planning to do about it.

God bless you. With earnest prayers for you and yours,

I remain,

(Signed) Alexander Hotovitzky
Dean of the Russian Cathedral

NOTA BENE: The recipient of the letter, Milto Sotir-Gurra also acted as interpreter at the Boston meeting in 1907 attended by Father Grigorieff of Salem, Massachusetts, who was sent to investigate whether or not the Albanians were able to support a priest.
METROPOLITAN FAN S. NOLI
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH
OF
METROPOLITAN FAN STYLIAN NOLI
MILITARY COLONY

Fan Stylian Noli was born in Ibrik-Tepe (Kuteza), an Albanian settlement south of Adrianople in Eastern Thrace, European Turkey on January 6, 1882. The population of Eastern Thrace at that time was overwhelmingly Turkish, with a sprinkling of Greeks in the South and Bulgarians in the North. Now how did the Albanian settlement of Ibrik-Tepe happen to be in that non-Albanian region? What is more, how did those Albanians happen to occupy one of the most fertile parts of the Empire at the confluence of Maritzha and Ergina, the two major rivers of Thrace? And what a region! It produced splendid crops of wheat, corn, sesame, grapes, and watermelons. The choicest kinds of melons, famous in the whole Turkish Empire, grew there in abundance.

According to tradition, Ibrik-Tepe was a military colony established by Byzantine Emperors. The latter wanted soldiers and volunteers at a short distance from Constantinople, the capital. Like all poor and mountainous countries, Albania, since time immemorial used to export soldiers and mercenaries. In peacetime it was not convenient for the Byzantine Emperors to send those soldiers back to their distant homeland. So they granted them the choicest pieces of farmland near Constantinople to keep them contented and ready to be called on short notice. Ibrik-Tepe was not the only Albanian settlement in Turkey. There were six
other similar settlements in Thrace, all of them well situated and equally prosperous.

The Turks who conquered Constantinople in 1453 inherited those military colonies from the Byzantines. They soon discovered that those Christian Albanians were as ready to fight for the Moslem Sultans as they were for the Orthodox Emperors. Consequently the Sultans favored them as much as their Christian predecessors did.

GRANDFATHER GEORGE NOLI

An Albanian leader was entrusted with the task of recruiting young men as volunteers whenever they were needed in the almost continuous Turkish campaigns in Asia or Europe. He enjoyed the courtesy title of “Captain.” Fan Noli’s grandfather was one of these Captains. He was called Captain Ali by the Turks and Captain George by the local Albanians. Like their Captains, all the Albanian recruits had two names, one Christian and one Moslem. Captain George Noli lost his life in one of those campaigns. He left a huge fortune consisting mostly of choice farmlands near the village.

GRANDMOTHER SUMBA NOLI

Grandmother Sumba became a rich young widow with four children, one son and three daughters ranging from two to seven years in age. A young widower named George Mitrushi won her for his wife. He had only one son by his first wife, no children by Grandma Sumba. Various versions of their marriage were current in the village. According to an old Albanian custom, Grandma Sumba did not want to marry again. She preferred to devote her life to her children. How was she persuaded to marry the young widower? Some thought that she did it to give a
father and protector to her four children. Others claimed that she was abducted by the young widower. Some others that knew a good deal about the whole affair thought that it was a marriage of love and that the abduction was a pre-arranged affair to save face for both of them. It was as hard for the young widow to marry a second time as it was for the young widower. Since the time of St. Paul second marriages were frowned upon and barely tolerated in the Orthodox world. Even now second marriages are rarely celebrated in the church, but always in the home of the bridegroom. The priest and the cantor are usually the only ones who attend. It may indeed have been a marriage of true love because the two got along well together until a long-drawn-out court litigation spoiled the whole story. But we will speak of that later.

GRANDFATHER MITRUSHI

Grandmother’s second husband, also named George, will be referred to from now on as Grandfather Mitrushi. He was one of the well-to-do leaders of the village. He was the exact opposite of the ordinary stepfather. As we said before, he had only one son and that son was a cripple. Since he had no other children, he felt that the Noli children were the only family he had, and he raised them all in his own home like a loving father as if they were his own children. Moreover, he proved to be an excellent manager of his own farmland and that of Grandma Sumba, which consisted mostly of land that was uncultivated and neglected due to the fact that Captain Noli had been away on his campaigns most of the time during his lifetime. He made every acre yield its utmost. Soon, owing to his wealth and ability, he became the uncontested leader of Ibrik-Tepe. He married off all his three stepdaughters to successful
farmers, and he selected an excellent bride for his stepson, Stylian Noli, in the person of Maria Gollachi, the strongest and most industrious girl of the village. Grandfather Mitrushi likewise took to his heart all his stepson’s children as if they were his own grandsons and granddaughters. On their side all the grandchildren were very fond of him because all of the Noli children except the youngest one were brought up in his house. Also the relation of the Noli children to Grandfather Mitrushi’s crippled son was most cordial. Since he never married and never had a family of his own, he was a good big brother to Grandma Sumba’s son Stylian and her three daughters. Later on he was a loving uncle to Stylian Noli’s children, who called him “Uncle Tassi.” The whole picture was that of a happy home.

EARLY YEARS

Fan Noli was the second of thirteen children, five sons and eight daughters, born to Stylian Noli and Maria Gollachi, both of them of good Albanian peasant stock. Of these children seven died in early childhood, as infant mortality was appalling at that time in Turkey.

He was brought up by his grandmother, Sumba Noli, the only one of the family who stayed at home while all the others had to work in the fields. As a child he was very delicate and almost succumbed to various diseases, especially typhus, small pox, and intermittent fever, which ran riot in his village.

On one occasion he was given up as dead. According to the custom, the church cantor had been reading psalms for half an hour while waiting for the priest to come and conduct the funeral. A few minutes after the priest had arrived, Mother Maria noticed that the child was trying
very hard to open his eyes. She screamed to the priest, “Stop! The boy is not dead.”

It was a miracle that the child was not buried alive. Such a ghastly blunder could easily have occurred. There was no doctor available in the village. The nearest city with a doctor could be reached in three hours in good weather. That journey was impossible in snow or rain. And this episode took place in one of the worst winters.

Grandmother Sumba served as his nurse during the various sicknesses from which the boy suffered continuously up to the age of eight. The good old grandmother, a tireless and devoted baby-sitter, did not know much about nursing. But she knew enough to bind the boy’s hands behind his back to prevent him from scratching the itchy smallpox sores on his face and making them worse. After the age of eight, the boy’s health improved slowly.

GREEK GRAMMAR SCHOOL

When Fan Noli reached the age of eight a family council was held to decide what to do with him. It was obvious that he was too sickly for the arduous work of farming. So it was unanimously agreed to send him to school, since he was no good for anything else.

But the boy refused to go. He had his reasons. The school teacher believed that whoever spares the rod spoils the child. He beat the children so savagely that the whole town resounded with the screams of the punished culprits. But that argument was not accepted by the family council.

Grandma Sumba was asked to persuade the child to go to school, as she had more influence on him than any other member of the family. She refused to do it. She did not believe in education, and much less in the brutal kind given by the local school teacher.
Then the lot fell to Mother Maria. She used all the
gentle persuasion she was capable of, but that did not help
at all. The boy was adamant. He did not want to hear
of going to school. There was only one solution left, and
that is what Mother Maria did. She forced the screaming
and kicking boy into a sack, slung it over her shoulders,
and marched to the schoolhouse.

The teacher, who heard the boy’s screams, ran to the
door to see what was the matter. Mother Maria said: “Here
is my son. But don’t beat him because I can’t bring him
on my back every day.” The teacher promised to be kind
to him. But the boy did not believe that the teacher would
keep his word. He said he would stay in the school on
one condition: Mother Maria should stay also, and protect
him from the teacher. She agreed to do it for the first day.

Then the little boy stopped crying and took a seat with
the other boys. But the lessons of the teacher, which were
in Greek, were too much for Mother Maria, who spoke
only Albanian and could not understand a single word
of Greek. She soon fell asleep, as she was exhausted by
the long struggle of catching the boy and carrying him by
force to school.

When the boy saw his mother sleeping he felt sorry for
her, went over to her, woke her up, and said: “Now,
Mother, you better go home. I can stay here without you.”
As a matter of fact, the boy did not need anyone to protect
him from the teacher, who, after all, punished only those
who did not know their lessons. Fan Noli proved to be a
good student, who studied his lessons thoroughly all his life.

This is how Fan Noli started his education in a Greek
school. By the way, Albanian schools were forbidden by
the Turkish government as well as by the Patriarchate of
Constantinople, which was in charge of all the Orthodox
schools in the Turkish Empire. He graduated from this school in four years instead of six. Since there was no seventh grade in Ibrik-Tepe, Fan Noli was sent to the neighboring town of Keshan to finish his grammar school. He was always the first in his class.

**STYLIAN GEORGE NOLI**

A year or so before Fan Noli was sent to Keshan to finish grammar school, his father, Stylian George Noli, started a lawsuit against his step-father, Grandfather Mitrushi, about the property left him by his father, Captain Noli. Grandfather Mitrushi never contested the rights of Stylian George Noli to his father's inheritance, but he claimed some remuneration for converting the utterly undeveloped land of Captain Noli into highly productive farmland. It was out of the question to repay him in cash for his labor because no farmer in the village, however prosperous, ever had any ready money.

A council of arbitration composed of mutual friends suggested that a fair solution of the problem would be to give two thirds of the land to Stylian Noli, and the other one third to Grandfather Mitrushi. They pointed out that a river formed a natural boundary, leaving one third of the land on one side and two thirds on the other. Grandfather Mitrushi was ready to accept this settlement as final. But Stylian George Noli objected and took the matter to court. After all, he could prove his legal right to the property with deeds which Grandmother Sumba had saved for him.

Everybody thought that Stylian Noli acted unwisely. It was obvious that the third part of his property for which he was fighting was not worth the trouble and expense it entailed. His wife Maria and his eldest son Dimitri
thought that they had more land than they could handle without that third, and that it was simply silly to spend a penny on it. Grandmother Sumba was noncommittal, because she did not want to hurt her only son’s feelings, but it was quite clear that she agreed with her daughter-in-law Maria and her grandson Dimitri. Some malicious onlookers loudly proclaimed that Stylian Noli spent his time in court to avoid working in the fields. They added that even when he was not busy with lawyers and courts, he spent his time hunting in the woods or drinking in the coffee-houses. Others who knew better thought that the whole thing was a struggle for leadership between Stylian Noli and Grandfather Mitrushi.

However it may be, Stylian Noli went on fighting desperately to get all his property. After several years of litigation the Turkish court gave its decision in favor of Stylian Noli. Unfortunately, in Turkey at that time a court decision did not mean automatic possession of the contested property. The matter was referred to a judge who was to transmit the property to Stylian Noli. But the judge never carried out the court decision.

COURT LITIGATION

The long-drawn-out court litigation simply ruined Stylian Noli. He spent enormous amounts of money and got nothing for it. On every market day he had to send bushels upon bushels of wheat, bushels upon bushels of cereal, piles of melons and watermelons to sell for ridiculously low prices in order to get money to pay the lawyer. Every now and then he had to go to Ouzoun Keprü to consult with his lawyers or attend court sessions, which meant additional expenses. After seven years of litigation he finally realized that he had lost the lawsuit. For him
it meant that he had been defeated in the greatest battle of his life, the contest for leadership. He felt that he had not lived up to what was expected of him as the son of his father, the heroic Captain Noli. Henceforth he was a broken man and sought consolation in the bottle, which made things worse.

CAPTAIN GERDA

It was whispered in the village that the man who had persuaded Stylian Noli to start his court litigation was Captain Sulo (short for Suleiman) Gerda, another man with frustrated ambitions. Captain Gerda had served in the contingents commanded by Captain Noli and succeeded him when he was killed.

Stylian Noli loved to spend hours and hours listening to Captain Gerda’s endless reminiscences. As a rule, he took little Theophan, or Fan for short, along with him because he wanted him to learn from an eye-witness what a great leader Captain Noli was. Stylian Noli and Captain Gerda both drank enormous amounts of liquor while Gerda told the most incredible hair-raising Wild West stories. In those stories he and Captain Noli, although hopelessly outnumbered, always succeeded in shooting their way through.

He especially liked to describe his experiences during the Russo-Turkish War from 1876-1878. He was sure that the Turkish fortress of Plevna, in Bulgaria, would not have fallen had he, Captain Gerda, been in command. Unfortunately, Osman Pasha was the commander and he surrendered the fortress to the Russians.

After the fall of Plevna, Captain Gerda was captured by the Russians and taken to St. Petersburg. On the first Sunday after his arrival Captain Gerda and his Albanian
volunteers wanted to go to church. So Gerda applied to the Russian officer in charge of his prisoner camp, and asked him to let the company go to the chapel or the nearest church. The Russian officer was flabbergasted. "You, a Moslem Turk, want to go to an Orthodox Church?" Gerda replied, "But I am Orthodox." And he made the sign of the cross to prove it. The officer noticed that Gerda made the sign of the cross in the correct Orthodox way and asked him: "And how is it that you, an Orthodox Christian, volunteered to fight with the Moslem Turks against the Orthodox Russians?" Captain Gerda replied without hesitation: "Religion is religion and profession is profession."

The Russian officer could not understand that, but he wanted to help his fellow Orthodox brethren and immediately gave them permission to go to church. There Gerda and his Albanian boys heard for the first time Russian Church Music and they were simply overwhelmed by its dynamic beauty. But that episode had terrible consequences for Captain Gerda. The Russian Government took a very serious view of this incident and decided, in the interest of the Orthodox Christians of Turkey, to prevent its recurrence. So, at the Peace Treaty of San Stephano which ended the Russo-Turkish War, a clause was inserted which strictly forbade the Turks to force Orthodox Christians into the army or recruit them as volunteers.

That meant the end of Gerda's career as a Captain of Christian volunteers in the Turkish Army. Then he tried to snatch the leadership of the village from Grandfather Mitrushi. That did not work. He could not succeed as long as Grandfather Mitrushi and Stylian Noli were united. Therefore he attempted to drive a wedge between them. He succeeded in doing that by persuading Stylian Noli to start the court litigation. He knew very well
Stylian Noli's ambitions for leadership. Moreover, he would prefer to have Stylian Noli as his leader rather than Mitrushi. To him Mitrushi was an upstart, while Stylian Noli was the son of a Captain whom he admired and under whom he had served for so many years. Captain Gerda never thought for a minute of working on his farm and forgetting about the military glories of his past. Both he and Stylian Noli could have been very successful and prosperous farmers. But both of them agreed that God had created them for higher and nobler purposes. It was exactly those higher purposes which kept them busy all night while they were drinking. Of course, the drinking was just incidental.

HOW THE TROUBLE STARTED

If Captain Gerda was his best friend, how was it that Stylian Noli did not join his contingent of volunteers? That would have been a very good occasion for Stylian to conquer St. Petersburg for the Sultan and become a hero like his father, Captain Noli. That was exactly what Stylian wanted to do. He had been preparing for years for such a glorious military expedition. That explains why he had learned Turkish so well. He thought that he would need that language for his future Turkish commanders. That was the reason he became the best marksman of the village. As a matter of fact, his house was full of guns, and he spent most of his time hunting in the woods to learn his shooting job to perfection.

But when the opportunity came and when Captain Gerda called him to arms, a villain stopped him on the threshold to Valhalla. The villain was Grandfather Mitrushi. He asked the would-be-hero whether there was any sense in fighting and dying for the Sultan of Turkey.
Grandfather Mitrushi meant well. He wanted to save Stylian for the farm. Had he wanted to get rid of him that would have been a perfect occasion to do it. But Stylian's reaction was exactly the opposite of what Grandfather expected. Stylian thought that Grandfather Mitrushi wanted to prevent him from becoming a military hero. He asked himself: "Would Napoleon give up a campaign for any reason whatever?" The answer was: "No."

Then Grandfather Mitrushi called Grandma to his aid. Grandma agreed with him, and urged her son to stay home and mind his farm, instead of taking a leap in the dark with Captain Gerda. Stylian, moved by her appeals, stayed at home, but he never forgave Grandfather Mitrushi. And this is how the trouble between them started. It was all a tragi-cal misunderstanding. Grandfather Mitrushi did not understand that Stylian Noli was full of dynamic energy, that he wanted to do something big and blow off steam, like every other young man of his age. Grandfather was a prosaic farmer, and thought that the farm was the place where Stylian Noli should apply his energies and get results for himself and his family. Of course, when Captain Gerda heard of this incident he used it to persuade Stylian of the villainy of his stepfather.

THREE PASSIONS

Stylian Noli had three passions: hero worship, leadership, and church music. He had a beautiful tenor voice and he was proud to occupy the seat of honor of the First Cantor between the Bishop’s throne and the altar every Sunday and holiday. He did a good job because he knew Byzantine Music thoroughly. He was glad to volunteer his services free of charge. All the congregation admired him. Even the Bishop, in his annual visit, used to praise
him and tell him he was surprised to find such a good cantor in a rural community.

Stylian Noli was anxious to teach Byzantine Music to his sons. But Dimitri, the elder son, would not hear of it. So the only one left was Theophan, or Fan for short. He was glad to find that Theophan was very receptive and he spent hours every day in teaching him Byzantine notation and chanting. As we shall see, these first music lessons from his father were extremely important in Fan Noli’s later life.

Beside music, Stylian Noli wanted to teach his sons hero worship. His hero was Napoleon. He had read all he could get his hands on about Napoleon in Greek and in Turkish, two foreign languages which he had mastered thoroughly. He wanted Dimitri to read all his books on Napoleon. Dimitri would not give a penny for Napoleon.

Again, his younger son Theophan was the only one left, and he was as receptive to hero worship as he was to music. Yes, Stylian Noli adored Napoleon when he kicked kings and princes from their thrones. He adored Napoleon when he smashed to pieces the armies of tyrants. He actually wept every time he mentioned his retreat from Moscow and his defeat at Waterloo. He was surprised that Theophan, who listened to him open-mouthed, failed to weep with him.

He kept on continually quizzing his son about every detail of Napoleon’s campaigns and battles. Here are some samples of his questions: “What did Napoleon say in his speech at the Pyramids?” The boy answered: “Twenty centuries of history are looking down upon us here.” Another question was: “What was Napoleon’s greatest campaign, and why?” The answer was: “His last Campaign of France, because he fought it with young men hastily
recruited and not with veterans." Still another question was: "Is it true that Napoleon achieved nothing of permanent value?" The answer was: "No, Napoleon changed the history of Europe. He destroyed feudalism and established democracy." Father Stylian Noli was delighted when little Theophan gave what he considered to be the correct answers to his questions.

Stylian Noli wanted to make leaders out of his sons. Of course, he started with his older son, Dimitri. But Dimitri was not interested in any kind of leadership, and much less village leadership. His father pointed out what Caesar said when asked whether country people were anxious to be leaders in their home towns: "I would rather be first in a village than second in Rome." But neither Napoleon nor Julius Caesar impressed Dimitri. Then he tried to persuade Dimitri to go through the gymnasium, study medicine and become a doctor. But Dimitri would not hear of gymnasiums, universities, or doctors. Again, the only one left to carry out Stylian Noli's ambitions was the frail young Theophan, who was always either catching, or recovering from, some disease. But Stylian Noli never gave his son up as hopeless. He could not, because he had to have someone to carry out his own frustrated ambitions.

GREEK GYMNASIUM

Since Fan Noli did so well in grammar school, his parents decided to send him to the Greek Gymnasium of Adrianople to continue his studies. It was a journey of five hours on horseback from Tbrik-Tepe to the station of Ouzoun-Kepru and two hours by rail from there to Adrianople. The Gymnasium was a combination of high school and junior college. It specialized in training young
men for teachers and cantors. There Fan Noli, along with the regular course, continued his studies in Byzantine Music with the First Cantor of the Greek Cathedral of Adrianople.

During his four years at the Gymnasium, Fan Noli boarded with a local Greek family. The price for his room and board was one dollar a week. This may sound inexpensive, but it was rather high for 1896. His father found it very hard to pay it regularly and he was always in arrears. The average farmer had very little ready money, and Stylian Noli had less than the others. In the first place, he had to pay his lawyers. In the second place, he distributed whatever money was left to his needy friends, who knew how to get it with worthless promissory notes. He had a big box full of them. He thought that, as a leader, he had to help his loyal followers. His mother, his wife, and his son Dimitri had to watch him very closely in order to save enough money to pay the current bills.

During his first year in Adrianople a big event took place in Fan Noli’s life. For the first time he saw Shakespearian tragedies and other dramatic works performed by travelling theatrical troupes. Some of the actors and actresses boarded in the same house that he did. Fan Noli used to copy their parts and help them in memorizing their roles, since a good many of them could not read. Some evenings when the prompter was sick, Fan Noli took his place, as the actors living at his boarding house had recommended him. In return for these services Fan Noli had a free pass to all performances. He enjoyed immensely this education in the theatre, which did not cost him a penny.

During the first year at Adrianople Fan Noli had recovered from the sicknesses of his early years. He was now
the strongest boy in his class, and before he finished he had become the champion wrestler of the entire Gymnasium. As always he was first in his studies.

At the end of each school year all the students went home for a vacation of three months. There was no vacation for Fan Noli. As soon as he got back home he had to help his family harvest the crops, thresh the wheat, cut the corn, stack the hay, and feed the animals. It was a relief to Theophan to return to Adrianople in the fall because, compared to farm work, gymnasium studies were a vacation.

The first three years in the Gymnasium passed quietly. But there was plenty of trouble for him in the fourth and last year. His favorite professor, who taught Religion and History, Professor Athanasiadis, was arbitrarily discharged by the school board three months before the end of the school year. No reason was given. All the students and their parents sympathized with Rev. Athanasiadis, because he was a good educator, a good preacher, and a good father. He had a large family consisting of his wife, his mother, and six little daughters to support with his small salary. To discharge him the way they did, and prevent him from getting another position, was to add insult to injury.

Fan Noli admired and respected him because he was a highly educated man. Moreover, he was most helpful to the students. It was he who loaned to Fan Noli and other students dozens and dozens of books to read in French and in Greek. This was especially appreciated because there was no public library where any books could be obtained.

Fan Noli thought that it was his duty to save this good professor from disgrace and starvation. He organized a students' strike in favor of Professor Athanasiadis. The
students quit their classes in protest, and the Gymnasium was closed for a month. The public was aroused, and the school board was compelled to reconsider their decision. Professor Athanasiadis was reinstated and allowed to teach until the end of the school year. Then he was transferred to a Gymnasium in Constantinople.

But the schoolboard got even with the organizers of the strike. All of them were expelled from school. They were allowed to resume their studies in the fall, after signing an apology. Fan Noli did not want to sign that apology by any means. He felt that he had nothing to apologize for. But that would have meant that he could not take the examination and get his graduation certificate. He needed that certificate to gain admission to a university.

His father was broken-hearted because, after four years of hard work and heavy expenses, his son did not bring home his graduation certificate. He asked his son: “What do you think Napoleon would do in such a case? Would he ruin his career by refusing to apologize to his teachers?” The answer was: “Of course not.” Then his father said, “Well, sign the apology, pass the examination, and bring me your certificate of graduation.” And so Fan Noli did.

ALBANIAN EDUCATION

The Greeks considered all the Orthodox Christians of the Turkish Empire as Greeks, no matter what their race or language was. Consequently Greek teachers tried to make Greek patriots of all the Orthodox pupils they had in their schools. How was it then that Fan Noli, who had seven years of Greek Grammar School and four years at a Greek Gymnasium, remained an Albanian peasant boy in spite of all that Greek education? There are several
reasons why Fan Noli emerged from that Greek water and shook it off like a duck.

The first reason can be found in an anecdote told of the well-known Swiss educator, Pestalozzi (1746-1827): Once a Swiss mother asked him whether he could give her son the kind of education he expounded. Pestalozzi asked the mother: “How old is your boy?” She answered: “Five years old.” Pestalozzi said: “Too late.” What he meant was that even at the age of five a child has got an education at home which it is very hard to change.

Owing to the sicknesses of his early childhood, Fan Noli started to go to school, not at the age of five, but at the age of eight. He was already a pretty big boy, who could speak only Albanian. He had already acquired some kind of an education from his grandmother, who was an old-fashioned Albanian peasant woman.

Grandmother Sumba stuck fanatically to her Albanian costume, worn in the highlands of Southern Albania even today, especially in Dardha, near Korcha, and in the district of Lungeria, near Ginokastra. She used to weave on her old-fashioned loom every piece of clothing she wore. She used to wear the full, bell-shaped skirt that is still worn in the highlands all over Albania, especially in the North. She refused to wear the Turkish bloomers made of printed machine-made material, which all the fashionable younger women of the village had adopted.

During the summer on Sunday and holiday afternoons, Grandmother Sumba went to the church square and was the first to start the picturesque folk dances, in which she excelled even after reaching the age of seventy. She waved her handkerchief, sang, leapt up in the air and spun around as if she were a girl in her teens. She had not an ounce of excess fat, she was as thin as a blade, and was as light
as a feather on her feet. She tried over and over to teach Albanian dances to her grandson Theophan. But those dances, as complicated and as strenuous as the Russian folk dances, were too much for the delicate boy. After a few leaps and pirouettes he got dizzy and collapsed. Then Grandmother Sumba concluded that for the time being she had better give up her dancing lessons.

Grandmother Sumba had not lost a single tooth even at the age of eighty, and used to make fun of her three daughters and her daughter-in-law, Maria, who were losing teeth before the age of forty-five. She thought the reason was that she never touched candy bought at any store, as many others used to do. She would eat only homemade sweets that she made herself.

Over and above the four traditional Eastern Orthodox Lenten Seasons of the year, which everybody used to keep, Grandmother Sumba also used to observe strictly the two total fasts, one at the beginning of the Easter Lent and the other beginning on Holy Monday. That meant no food and no water for three days, after which Holy Communion was received. In these total fasts the only one in the family who kept her company was her grandson Theophan. She always tried to dissuade him because he was sickly. But the boy answered: “If you can do it, I can do it.”

Another one of Fan Noli’s educators was the great story-teller, Captain Gerda, whom we have mentioned before. He used to attend the recitals given by the local school teacher in Ibrik-Tepe at least twice a year. The parents and all the notables of the village attended them. The program consisted of songs sung by the various classes, declamations, and poetry recited by outstanding pupils. It was all in Greek. Captain Gerda, who could not understand a word of Greek, would always rise during one of these long re-
citals and shout this protest: "Shkip, ore Shkip!" By which he meant, "In Albanian! Give us a recital in Albanian! Otherwise we don't understand a word." The majority of the audience agreed with Captain Gerda, because they did not understand Greek either. That was a constant reminder to young Fan Noli that Albanian, and not Greek, should be taught to those Albanian boys.

The third educator was Uncle Tassi, the crippled son of Grandfather Mitrushi. Uncle Tassi, totally incapacitated for farm work, concentrated on books. He had the largest library in the village. When the court litigation began, Stylian Noli and his family, including Grandmother Sumba, moved to a house which she owned. But that did not prevent the children and even Mother Maria from being on excellent terms with Grandfather Mitrushi and Uncle Tassi. So far as the young Fan Noli was concerned, he used to go every day to the old house where he was brought up, and which he loved more than his new home. Grandfather Mitrushi would welcome him with open arms and was always glad to see him. When he was away working on his farm, Uncle Tassi was there to replace him in his vast empty house. Then Uncle Tassi showed the boy the books he had, especially books with pictures. He used to lend books to the boy to take home to read at his leisure.

Once when Fan Noli was on vacation from his Gymnasium, Uncle Tassi recommended two of the most precious books he possessed for the boy to read. One of them was the Albanian translation of the New Testament by Kostandin Kristoforidi. The other was an illustrated edition of "The Story of Scanderbeg" in Greek. The boy took the books home and read them both avidly from beginning to end.

One day the boy was stretched out on the rug full length
on his stomach, with his elbows on the floor and the book between them, absorbed in his reading. Mother Maria was observing him with a sad expression on her face. She shook her head and said, "I'm sorry, my poor boy, but it is not your fault. It is all mine. It was I who carried you on my back to school. I never imagined that school would ruin you like that."

When Fan Noli had read the books, he took them back to Uncle Tassi. The latter began to quiz him on the New Testament and on Scanderbeg to see whether he had read them. When Theophan showed him to his satisfaction that he had done so, Uncle Tassi began to tell him how important those two books were. He concluded:

"I do not mean to criticize your father at all. He may be right. Personally, I feel that whenever you have to make a decision, you must not ask yourself: 'What would Napoleon do in that case?' Ask yourself: 'What would Jesus do in that case?' He is a better guide than Napoleon. Again, whenever you have to make a decision concerning your own people, don't ask what Napoleon would do. Remember that Napoleon was a Frenchman, and would do whatever would help France and the French people. You must ask yourself: 'What would Scanderbeg do?' Because he was an Albanian and would do whatever would help Albania and the Albanian people. Your father is right when he says that Napoleon was a great man, but Scanderbeg was also great in his own way and in his own country. Napoleon won his victories with a large army which he had inherited from his predecessors. Scanderbeg won his victories with a small army which he had created himself. Moreover, he had to fight two great Sultans who led the greatest armies of that period."

From the day Uncle Tassi gave him this lesson, Fan
Noli, in his imagination, holding Kristoforidi's New Testament in his hand, jumped on his Rocinante horse and became a Knight of Scanderbeg and a missionary of Christ among the Albanian people. He had two great leaders to guide him in his life, Jesus and Scanderbeg. Compared with them, the Greek teachers of his grammar school and Gymnasium were too puny to impress him or influence him.

GOOD-BYE, IBRIK-TEPE

The school board of Adrianople more than got even with Fan Noli for the student strike in favor of Professor Athanasiadis. Not only did they postpone his graduation from May to September, but they also prevented him from getting a teaching job that year. It was too late; all the schools engaged their teachers long before September. Moreover, was there any chance of getting a teaching job the following year? There was none at all. The school board had blacklisted him and would not give him the indispensable recommendation for getting a position in any other Greek school in Turkey.

Fan Noli reached the conclusion that he had to leave Turkey and make a new start in some other country. He decided to go to Constantinople and take the next ship to Athens. His plan was to apply for a job there, then continue his studies at the University of Athens the following fall. A day or so before his departure his old intermittent fever came back and sent him to bed. The problem was: Should he wait in Ibrik-Tepe to get rid of intermittent fever? A torrential river made the trip to the nearest town with a doctor impossible. So the best solution seemed to be to go to a hospital in Constantinople, get rid of the intermittent fever, and then take the ship to Athens.

Fan Noli was too weak to sit on his beloved horse,
Balyashi, for the five-hour trip to Ouzoun-Kepru where he would take the train to Constantinople. The ox-cart was the only conveyance for the sick young man. He could lie comfortably on a mattress on the ox-cart and wrap himself in a warm blanket. Moreover, the covered ox-cart would protect him from the continuous rain of the fall. Was it wise for a sick man to make that trip? Would it not have been wiser to stay in bed in Ibrik-Tepe, even without a doctor?

The problem was solved as follows: Stylian Noli asked himself, "What would Napoleon do in this case? Would he give up the trip which he had decided upon just for a little fever?" The answer was: "No, nothing could stop Napoleon." Fan Noli asked himself: "What would Scanderbeg do in such a case?" The answer was easy to give, "Nothing could stop him either." But besides Napoleon and Scanderbeg, there was another guide to consult: "What would Jesus do in that case?" The answer was: "Jesus would trust in God and go ahead." Grandmother Sumba and the other members of the family had some doubts about Napoleon and Scanderbeg, but they all trusted Jesus. So the decision was unanimous.

There was one thing left to do before starting, and that was deeply painful. That was to say good-bye to Ibrik-Tepe, to the two homes, all the relatives and all the friends, human and sub-human. It was sad and moving to take leave of the dear relatives with whom Fan Noli had spent eighteen years of his life, and without whom life was unthinkable. It was heartbreaking when he went to say good-bye to Spotty, his dog, Blacky, the cat, Balyashi, the horse, the cows, and the black buffaloes with their calves. Instinctively they all seemed to know that Theophan was leaving them forever. Especially Spotty, the dog, and Balyashi, the horse,
the more intelligent of the animals, certainly knew that a catastrophe was impending. They showed it by the sad expression in their eyes.

Balyashi, the horse, looked at him as if to say: "How can you have the heart to leave me, after such a long friendship? I am the family horse. I carried your father back and forth safely from Ibrik-Tepe to Ouzoun-Kepru so many times during his court litigations. And you know how I loved to carry you to Ouzoun-Kepru for your trip to your Adrianople Gymnasium. Then I was always waiting for you at the Ouzoun-Kepru station to carry you back to Ibrik-Tepe for your vacation every summer. True, I walked slowly and took my time. But I did that partly because I am an old horse, and partly because I did not want to jolt you. Then, as you remember, the nearer I got to our dear Ibrik-Tepe, the livelier my pace became, and I felt as young and sprightly as in the good old days. And do not think that I love you only because you used to share with me the juicy sesame cakes and the griddle cakes, which I ate from your hand very carefully without ever biting your fingers. No, my dear boy, it was the pure love of a big brother. And I showed my affection when I lovingly rubbed my cheek and my lips against you. Remember, those were my kisses."

Fan Noli, in his imagination, heard this long farewell monologue, and he was sure he saw tears in the horse's eyes. The farewell to the dog Spotty and the cat Blacky, and the other animals was not less moving. Fan Noli wept much more when he took leave of his sub-human friends. That did not mean that he loved his relatives less, but because those poor animals could not express their feelings.

When everything was ready for the departure, something unexpected happened. Grandfather Mitrushi and
Uncle Tassi came to see Fan Noli off. Since the court litigation, they had not visited Stylian Noli in his new home. But this event was too big for them to miss. Uncle Tassi explained the situation beautifully: “We have always loved the boy, and we had to come and see him off, perhaps for the last time. We have always felt that he has the spirit of Jesus. He has proved it on this occasion. He has brought us together again after the unfortunate incident that separated us for so many years.”

Captain Gerda, who never missed a gathering of any importance, was there to give his blessing to the grandson of his old commander, Captain Noli. He gave the following advice to the young man: “Don’t stay long in Athens. Go to Albania next. That’s our old Mother Country. It is just north of Greece.”

Thereupon uncles, aunts, and all their children came to swell the family group. Then big brother Dimitri, who was on the driver’s seat on the ox-cart, made the ominous announcement: “Now we must leave, because we must reach Ouzoun-Kepru before dark.” He raised his whip in the air to give the signal for the departure. Grandmother Sumba dropped to her knees, crossed herself, made three prostrations touching the ground with her forehead, and said: “Lord Jesus, Mary Mother of God, and Mighty St. George, protect my boy.”

Mother Maria also knelt and tried to repeat the same prayer, but the words stuck in her throat. She only sobbed and wept quietly. All the relatives and friends were likewise moved, and could hardly say good-bye.

The animals, as if they felt what was happening, joined the tearful chorus. Spotty, the dog, threw himself on his stomach on the ground, stretched his neck upwards, and started a dismal whining and howling. Blacky, the cat,
joined him with a soft miaowing, which became louder and louder. Balyashi, the horse, started his desperate neighing. Moved by the general commotion, and sensing a catastrophe in the air, all the animals of the Noli family and the neighborhood joined in a tremendous fortissimo send-off.

In all that weeping and wailing crowd of men and animals, Stylian Noli was the only one who showed no emotion whatever in his face. Very probably he was asking himself: "What would Napoleon do in such a case? Would he weep like a woman and howl like an animal?"

He answered to himself: "Of course not." He acted accordingly.

Dimitri, who could not stand any more of this demonstration, cracked his whip and the ox-cart moved forward. Fan Noli never saw Ibrik-Tepe again.

REMINISCENCES

As the ox-cart jogged and jolted along on the rough road, Fan Noli's feverish thoughts turned to what he had left behind. One of the questions that bothered him especially was whether he would ever see any of his relatives again. Anyhow he would never forget them. Reminiscences of them filled his mind now and recurred again and again all his life.

Once his mother and grandmother were busy at a water mill a short distance from their home. While they were grinding grain at the mill, they left the child Fan Noli outdoors. For safety they tied him up to the saddle of Balyashi, the horse. Somehow or other the child, while riding on the saddle, or jumping and romping around it, got loose from the reins by which he was tied. He toddled over to the bank of the brook to see the water roaring toward the mill.
While he was absorbed in watching the brook, he made a false step, and down he went toward the water. Just as the child was about to plunge into the river, his skirt caught on a thorny bush and held him fast. The child, feet up and head in the mud, began to scream desperately for help. Grandmother and mother heard the screams, noticed the deserted saddle, and ran to the brook. They were aghast when they saw the hair-raising posture of the child. There was no way of getting to him on account of the steep, slippery bank and the thick, thorny bushes. Grandmother ran to the mill to get a rope.

In the meantime, Mother Maria tried to encourage her little boy to quiet down, because help was coming. But Grandmother was late and in the meantime the child's skirt began tearing. The danger was imminent and the suspense was unbearable. Mother Maria tried to get down and help the child. Her feet sank down in the mud deeper and deeper. Holding onto the thorny bushes she also began to scream for help.

Just then Grandmother arrived with the rope and a strong miller boy. They had a hard time pulling Mother Maria and her son to safety holding on to the rope. When they were safely in the mill, Grandmother remarked: "I understand how the little boy slipped toward the brook. I don't understand how you could do it. Try to grow up."

After that plunge the child had an attack of fever, which kept him in bed for several days. But he soon recovered. When the fever ended and he opened his eyes, he saw Grandmother on one side of the bed and Mother on the other tearfully crossing themselves. Then Grandmother remarked: "We are always on the point of losing the boy, and then we get him back again." How could
Fan Noli ever forget those two guardian angels? How could he leave them behind?

Fan Noli thought of his hard-working mother, whose life was one long-drawn-out ordeal of farm work with not even a day off for childbirths. She was the first one in the house to get up in the morning and the last to go to bed. During the summer she worked from dawn to dusk in the fields. In winter she was always busy with housework. Fan Noli never had seen her sick in bed. But she must have had some kind of trouble in her back, because she often stretched on the floor and asked the little Theophan to walk back and forth on her back. Whenever he would tiptoe gently for fear of hurting her she would say: “Harder, harder!” This treatment gave her some relief.

Perhaps she might have had some internal trouble as a result of her thirteen childbirths. There was no obstetrician in Ibrik-tepe and the women of the village knew nothing about the dangers of childbirth. To them the delivery of babies was a minor operation which they could perform themselves without assistance. They reasoned: “If the cat can make it, so can we.” Babies were often born in the fields to mothers on their way home from work. They would simply wrap them in their apron, sling them over their shoulders, and bring the new addition to the family home. That very probably explains how Fan Noli’s sister, Paraskevia, the hardiest girl in the family, died after her second child was born and how his sister Shirma died after her first child was born.

Fan Noli never saw his grandmother again. He did see his father, his mother, and his little sister Sultana some eleven years later, in 1911, when he visited the Albanian community of Sofia, Bulgaria. The first question Fan Noli asked his parents was: “Why did you not bring Grand-
mother Sumba and Big Brother Dimitri along?" His mother replied: "Grandmother had to stay and look after the house. Dimitri had to take care of the farm."

Then Fan Noli tried to get from his mother the exact year of his birth. Mother Maria answered: "I don't remember the year, but I do remember that it was Christmas Eve, and the church bells were ringing." She meant Christmas Eve according to the Old Calendar, which according to the New Calendar was January 6th. A few years later Fan Noli got the exact year of his birth, 1882, from his Brother Dimitri.

The outstanding event in Sofia was the Divine Liturgy conducted by Fan Noli, who had been ordained as priest three years before. Stylian Noli could not attend the service, as he was sick in bed and could not get up. He had been drinking all night to celebrate the big event, and in the morning he was so dizzy he could not stand on his feet. He ordered another bottle, hoping this would put him on his feet more firmly and enable him to walk to the church. The bottle, unfortunately, had the opposite effect.

But Mother Maria and Sultana were there to hear Father Theophan conduct the liturgy in the Cathedral of Sofia. It was all in Albanian. At the end of the service, Mother Maria and sister Sultana came to get his blessing and take the altar bread, which is usually distributed to all those attending the service. They both made three prostrations, forehead on the ground, received the altar bread, and kissed Father Theophan's hand in the old-fashioned way, which consists of first kissing the hand of the priest, touching it to the forehead, then kissing his hand a second time. When the service was over, Mother Maria said to her son: "It was Grandmother Sumba who ordered us to perform those old-fashioned prostrations and the
hand-kiss." Then she added significantly: "I wish Captain Gerda could have heard that service. Because it was all in Albanian, and he could have understood every single word."

The final parting at the station of Sofia was very sad. Stylian Noli and Sultana took leave silently, without being able to utter a word. Mother Maria, who had heard from the Sofia Albanians how highly they esteemed her son and his work, remarked: "You are such a big man now that I hesitate to kiss you as I did when you were a little boy." Fan Noli replied, "Go ahead, Mother, I am still your son." Mother Maria kissed him on the forehead, and her tears ran down on the cheeks of the young priest. Mother Maria kept on crying, and searched desperately for her handkerchief. Fan Noli gave her two of his as a souvenir.

When Mother Maria got the handkerchiefs, she said: "Now I know that the greatest thing I ever did in my life was when I took you to school in a bag." She smiled and wiped away her tears.

Thereupon Fan Noli affectionately kissed little Sultana good-bye. The train was ready to leave. The conductor shouted: "All aboard." In the old Ibrik-Tep fashion, Fan Noli kissed his mother's hand and his father's hand, and said good-bye to them. He never saw them again. They passed on soon after that, one after the other, his father first, his mother next, and his grandmother last.

BIG BROTHER DIMITRI

Dimitri was merrily humming a folk song and lustily cracking the whip in the air. He never touched the oxen. He loved them too much. He just wanted to encourage them, to tell them he was in a hurry. He was the sturdiest boy in the family. The only one who could stand against
him was Paraskevia (Palavia, for short), the sturdiest girl in the family. Whenever she shook her fist at Dimitri, he backed down with a gallant smile. She made short shrift of the sickly Theophan, and shoved him around with a disdainful gesture. She kicked his books which were in her way all over the place, right and left.

Dimitri was an ideal farmer. He was as strong as the two oxen he was driving. Once the young men of the neighborhood staged a contest in front of the well. The idea was to see who could drink as big a bucketful of water as an ox could. Dimitri won the contest. He gulped down the whole bucketful, then turned the bucket upside down to show that not a single drop was left in it. He was unanimously acclaimed the bucket champion. You could hear the water swishing around within him when he walked.

Mother Maria was very proud of her son Dimitri as the best farmer in the village. Grandmother Sumba admired him as a great dancer, who had learned all the tricks of the trade from her and had improved on them.

As they travelled along, Dimitri tried to entertain his sick brother by telling him anecdotes. This time it was a story he had heard from Captain Gerda. It occurred in the market place of the neighboring town of Keshan, where the villagers used to sell their surplus produce. This was the story: A young Bulgarian widow was caught in the act of stealing a loaf of bread from a bakery. She had to do it, because she and her two children were actually starving. The Turkish policeman who arrested her was pondering what punishment he should inflict on her. His first idea was to cut off the greedy hands of the widow. But that gave him a problem. Did she grab the loaf with both hands or with one? He did not want to cut off the innocent hand. As the woman would not answer questions, the problem
remained unsolved. So he decided to impose on her a punishment which is to be found in the Nibelungen Saga. It occurs in the third act of Wagner's "Walküre." There Wotan threatens to impose on his disobedient daughter, Brünhilde, the following punishment. He would put her to sleep in the middle of a forest so that the first lout who came along and wanted her could have her.

It had to be an exemplary punishment that would put an end to the stealing of loaves by widows with starving children. The young Bulgarian mother was placed in the center of the market place holding the corpus delicti, the stolen loaf. The town crier beat a drum to attract the attention of the people. He announced the crime committed, and the punishment imposed by the Turkish Solomon: "Anyone who wants this woman can have her free of charge."

No one seemed to want her. The crier beat his drum again, more vigorously, and shouted the announcement again. This time someone came forward and claimed the woman. He was a dirty hobo in rags with a hideous gargoyles face. The wretched woman fainted and collapsed when she saw him. Her two children, who were standing nearby, wailed pitifully.

That was too much for Captain Gerda, who happened to be among the spectators. He stepped forward and shouted to the policeman: "You cannot enforce antiquated laws, which have been abrogated in Turkey long ago. I warn you that if you go through with this ghastly ordeal, I will give you a lesson that you will not forget as long as you live!" He put his hand on the pistol in his belt to show that he meant business. The assistant policeman, who happened to be an Albanian, whispered to his chief that he would have the worst trouble of his life with that
Captain Gerda, and advised him to release the woman. So the policeman ate humble pie and ordered the release of the woman, warning her not to do it again.

Captain Gerda threw at the feet of the policeman a few coins to pay for the loaf, and ordered his companions to help the woman to her feet and to return her with her children to her own village. The woman screamed that she would never go back to her village after that public disgrace. So Captain Gerda took her and her children to Ibrik-Tepe, and brought them to Grandmother Sumba, saying: “Here is a good woman. Treat her well. You may be sure that she will repay you with her work.” Grandmother Sumba kept her only for a year, because the hard-working woman soon found a husband, with whom she lived happily.

At the end of the story Dimitri added significantly: “It is sometimes hard to believe Captain Gerda’s stories, because he knows how to embellish them. But this story has been corroborated by several witnesses who were present at the market in Keshan on that day. By the way,” he added, “the last time I met Captain Gerda, he told me how our grandfather, Captain Noli, died during the siege of Sevastopol in the Crimean War. He was blown to bits by a volley of shrapnel when his company was advancing against the fortress of Malakov. A bloody piece of human flesh hit Captain Gerda on his right eye, and ever since, as long as he lived, he had a twitching of his right eye. When I asked him why he had never told me that story before, he answered: ‘Because I always hoped to go back to the army as a Captain of Volunteers, and I did not want to discourage boys from joining my contingent.’”

After a painful jolting of eight hours, the two brothers reached the station of Ouzoun-Kepru. Brother Dimitri
lifted Theophan like a feather and put him on the train with his bundle. He kissed him good-by and left. Would Fan Noli ever see this good brother again, who took care of the farm and helped him through the Gymnasium when Father was definitely down and out?

Yes, Fan Noli saw Dimitri again about sixteen years later, in 1916, in the United States. Dimitri had come to America before 1914. He worked in a munitions factory doing the most dangerous work, for which he was highly paid. During the war he accumulated several thousand dollars. He did not trust the banks, and carried all this money in his money-belt. One day he showed the whole amount to Fan Noli, who could not believe the plain truth that Dimitri had made all that money honestly. Dimitri counted out one thousand dollars in bills and handed them to Fan Noli saying: “I know you are rich in ideas and poor in dollars. Here is something to help you along. I am leaving for Ibrik-Tepe in a few days, and I came to say good-by.”

Fan Noli asked him what he was going to do with all that money in Ibrik-Tepe. Dimitri answered: “I am going to buy a big farm next to ours, plant mulberries, grow silkworms, and make silk. I shall become the best farmer of Thrace.” Fan Noli tried to dissuade him, saying: “It would be unwise to invest a single penny in a village of the Balkans, because of the unsettled political conditions. The best thing for you to do is bring your family here and invest your money right here. You will be successful no matter what business you start.”

Poor Dimitri did not listen to his brother’s advice, went back to Ibrik-Tepe, invested all his savings there, and, as we will see later, lost every penny. He never recovered from that catastrophe,
Sometime after Dimitri left the United States for Ibrik-Tepe, Hassan Bitinska told his friend Fan Noli the following story:

"Big Brother Dimitri went to an Albanian coffee-house in Waterbury, Connecticut, and ordered a cup of Turkish coffee. The other Albanians who were there had no idea that he was your brother. They were noisily discussing all kinds of questions concerning the Albanian Federation Vatra, of which you were President then. Some of the boys were very critical of the way you managed the Federation's affairs. At first Dimitri listened without saying a word. But when he could stand it no longer, he stood up and yelled: 'Boys, I wish I could argue with you about my brother. Unfortunately I am not very strong in arguments. But I can persuade you how good my brother is in this fashion!' He rolled up his sleeve and shook his fist at them threateningly. That put an end to the discussion. No one wanted to have an argument with that husky country boy, who was the best worker in the factory, always working overtime and enjoying it.

END OF ALBANIAN IBRIK-TEPE

As the train rolled along from Ouzoun-Kepru Fan Noli in his fever was thinking of the beautiful village he had left behind. It was built on a series of rolling hills. They were separated by a meandering brook, which crawled like a snake between them. The Church of St. George, built on the highest hill, dominated the village.

All the houses looked alike. Each house was in a huge enclosure surrounded by a hedge. Inside this enclosure were the various buildings needed on a farm. There was a barn for hay and a stable for animals. Adjoining the barn there was a room for the wine press and a distillery for
making raki, the local white whiskey. Between the house and the stable there was a garden growing tomatoes, peppers, cucumbers, onions, garlic, and mint.

The fronts of the houses were colorful with morning-glories, marigolds, basil, and roses planted on either side of the front door. In front of this door was an arbor, or bower, of latticework densely overgrown with grapevines. It was large enough to serve as an outdoor sitting room, and it was a pleasant shaded retreat during the hot summer afternoons. Near the street, in a convenient place for animals and humans, each house had its own well.

Every villager owned enough farmland to make a living, provided he was willing to work. There was plenty of everything that the average farmer needed. The best evidence for the prosperity of Ibrik-Tepe was that no one ever emigrated to make a living elsewhere.

The only thing that was missing was girls. Most of the households had plenty of boys and very few girls. The cases of Grandmother Sumba, who had one son and three daughters, and Mother Maria, who had eight girls and five boys, were exceptional. The right hand neighbor of the Noli’s had eleven boys and one girl. The left hand neighbor had eight boys and not a single girl. Consequently, the girls of Ibrik-Tepe had tacitly acquired the privilege of picking out their own husbands. The usual way the girl did it was by sending a handkerchief which she had embroidered to a boy anonymously, through a friend.

Fan Noli got such an embroidered handkerchief soon after his first year in grammar school, at the age of nine. He asked his grandmother what it meant. Grandma Sumba had the biggest laugh of her life. She could not imagine any girl falling in love with her sickly grandson.

When she stopped laughing Fan Noli repeated his
question. Grandmother Sumba answered: “I can’t tell you, because you could not understand it. You were not meant to be a boy. Your mother, after having her first son, Dimitri, wanted to have a girl. Somehow or other, she must have changed her mind at the last minute, and she had a boy, who for all practical purposes should have been a girl.”

Fan Noli insisted that he was a boy from top to bottom. His grandmother said: “Prove it. I call boys only those who can handle shotguns. There are plenty in the house, in every corner, but you have never touched one.”

Thereupon Fan Noli rushed into the house, grabbed a shotgun from the nearest corner, ran out, aimed high up in the sky, and pulled the trigger. Bang! A scream of terror came as an answer from the house across the street. Grandmother ran to see who was the victim. It was the grandmother in the house across the way. Fortunately, the wound was not serious. The old girl was only lightly grazed by the buckshot.

Grandmother Sumba came back immediately and with a solemn face said to her grandson: “Now I know that you are a boy. But for heaven’s sake, don’t ever touch a shotgun again!” Fan Noli followed her advice. That was his first and last shot with a firearm.

Who was the girl that had sent the handkerchief? Grandmother Sumba discovered her the following Sunday afternoon by starting her dance as usual in the public square and by waving that embroidered handkerchief. It was the ten year old Shasha. The girl recognized the handkerchief, approached Grandmother, and asked her what was the answer to her message. Grandmother tried to discourage the girl by saying that her grandson was a sickly boy who needed a nurse, not a bride. That did not discourage Shasha.
She said: "I am ready to be his nurse and wait until he recovers. Moreover, I know how to cure him with my herbs." Grandmother replied: "The boy already has one nurse, me. He does not need two. And I know more about herbs than you do."

Shasha would not take "No" for an answer. Grandmother had a problem on her hands. But an epidemic of typhus cut short the Gordian knot. Both Shasha and Fan Noli were knocked down. They had a long struggle between life and death. Shasha succumbed. Fan Noli recovered. It was on that occasion that he was almost given up as dead.

Big Brother Dimitri got such an embroidered handkerchief two days after he became famous as a bucket champion. He asked Grandmother Sumba how he could find out which girl sent it. Grandmother replied: "You will find her out in the Church Square. Watch the girls when they dance and wave their handkerchiefs. The one that has a handkerchief similar to yours and gives you a big smile — that's the girl." Dimitri did find her on the Church Square — on the following Sunday. Her name was Athanasia, which means "Immortality."

Some girls were too bashful to publicize their affections through their handkerchiefs. But they were forced to declare their choice at the swing, which hung from one of the huge trees on the Church Square. Each marriage-able girl had to take her turn in the swing. Her younger companions would whip the girl with switches while she was swinging back and forth until she had given the name of her sweetheart. Then she was released and another girl took her place.

After the girls came the boys, who had to go through the same procedure. Thus all the boys and girls were
BIOGRAPHY OF FAN STYLIAN NOLI

obliged to put their cards on the table and avoid useless rivalries, for which the farmers had no time to waste. The parents usually gave their consent, unless there were serious reasons unanimously accepted by all the parties concerned. If the marriage of the youngsters in love was prevented for reasons which were not considered valid by one of the parties, endless feuds would arise.

What happened to the young men for whom there were no brides available in Ibrik-Tepe? As a rule they would abduct their brides from the nearest Greek or Bulgarian villages. Those abductions were usually pre-arranged affairs, especially because they were very economical. The traditional wedding used to last at least seven days, with various ceremonies, banquets, and carousals costing enormous sums of money, which was hard on even the wealthiest farmers. But whenever the bride was “abducted,” ceremonies were automatically eliminated. Of course, an abducted bride was not expected to have a wedding gown, trousseau, or dowry. Moreover, abductions were more dramatic and more romantic.

Once Fan Noli with his father had to chant at half a dozen marriages of “abducted” brides, which took place one after the other all day long. They were surprised that the brides, though abducted, appeared to be very happy. Not one of them was crying. Stylian Noli became a little tired and left before the last wedding. He left the young Fan Noli alone for the sixth ceremony.

After the last ceremony, one of the “abducted” girls, as homely and scrawny as she could be, stepped forward and asked the priest: “What about me?” The priest asked her: “Where is your prospective bridegroom?” The girl replied: “Right there, that little cantor boy.” And she pointed to Fan Noli. The priest objected, saying: “That
boy is only ten years old, and you must be about twenty.” The girl answered: “That does not matter. I am not in a hurry. I can wait until he becomes of marriageable age.”

The priest put an end to the discussion by saying: “You can only be betrothed to that boy with the consent of his parents. Then you can wait for the wedding as long as you like.” The girl replied: “That suits me perfectly.”

Child betrothals of the kind described above were very often arranged by parents in Ibrik-Tepe. Sometimes a baby boy and a baby girl were betrothed in their cradles. Sometimes the bridegroom was in his cradle and the bride was in grammar school. The reason was obvious: Girls were at a premium in Ibrik-Tepe and every father wanted to make sure that his son would have a bride, and that his family would have an extra farm worker. Age and looks did not matter at all.

This explains why the scrawny girl joined the group of “abducted” brides. She was sure to get a husband in Ibrik-Tepe. Moreover, she had already made her choice. She was not a stranger to the Noli family. She used to come almost every summer and work on their farm as if she were a member of the family. Grandmother Sumba and Mother Maria admired her because she was one of the hardest workers they had ever seen. Stylian Noli was a close friend of her father. Though of Greek descent, she spoke Albanian like a native-born girl of Ibrik-Tepe. Her name was also Paraskevia, the same name as that of the oldest Noli girl.

The scrawny Paraskevia, holding the frail Fan Noli by the hand, marched from the church directly to Grandmother Sumba, and said: “Give us your blessing. Here is my fiancé.” Grandmother Sumba replied: “You have my blessing before you ask it.” Mother Maria, who overheard
the conversation said: "You have my blessing also."
Grandmother added: "Thank heavens! Now, all we have
to do is get my son Stylian's blessing, and the whole thing
is settled."

In the meantime, Mother Maria noticed that her son
Fan Noli looked very unhappy, and seemed at a loss as to
what was being arranged for him. She asked: "What about
the boy? Did you ask him whether he wants such a
betrothal?" Paraskevia answered quickly: "Of course he
does." Thereupon she gave Fan Noli a pleading look.
When she saw that this did not work, she looked daggers
at him, as if to say: "If you say 'No', I will fix you!" The
mother insisted, saying: "Well, my sweet boy, what do
you say?" The boy answered immediately: "Don't ask me.
I'll leave it to you and Grandma."

Just then Stylian Noli came in. Grandmother and
Mother Maria explained the situation. Unhesitatingly
Stylian Noli said: "They have my blessing before they ask
me. This is the best bride we could find for our boy. But
we must wait until her father gives his consent."

Two days later the girl's father arrived. He had no
objection to the betrothal on account of the difference in
age between the bride and bridegroom. But when he looked
at the frail Theophan he took Stylian aside and said gruffly
to him: "Oh No! I can't give my consent. This is bad
business. I am sorry to say that boy will not live long
enough to reach a marriageable age." That ended the
romance. Paraskevia, with tears in her eyes, said good-bye
to Fan Noli and went back home with her father. She died
a few years later in a terrible epidemic of typhus which
devastated the region.

In 1912-1913, during the Balkan War, Ibrik-Tepe was
occupied first by the Bulgarians, then by the Turks, and
finally by the Greeks. Each of these armies had to live on the land, which meant that the villagers of Ibrik-Tepe were simply skinned alive. The final catastrophe came in 1923, after the defeat of the Greeks by the Turks. Then the Turkish Government ordered all the Christians of Turkey, including the Albanians of Ibrik-Tepe, to leave the country. They were allowed to take with them only what they could carry on their backs. So they took only a bundle of clothes and some blankets. All the Albanians of Ibrik-Tepe were dumped on the western side of the River Maritza, which marked the frontier between Greece and Turkey.

The bulk of these Albanians were ordered by the Greek Government to settle in a swampy, malarial region of Macedonia. Hundreds of them died like flies. Those who survived ran away to save their lives, and swell the starving proletarians of Salonika, where they died in squalor and misery. Poor Dimitri, who had gone back to Ibrik-Tepe with thousands of dollars in his belt, and who had invested every penny in his mulberry orchard, was expelled penniless to the western side of the Maritza. He ended up in a village near Xanthi, where he tried in vain to make a new start in life. That killed him. He sought consolation in the bottle and died a few years later as his father did.

That was the end of the Albanian settlement of Ibrik-tepe. The village is still there on the map. The meandering brook still runs through the hills, but now the inhabitants are immigrant Turks from Macedonia and Thrace. Not a single Albanian was left there. The Church of St. George was turned into a mosque.

A nephew, who told this tragic story to his uncle, Fan Noli, remarked: "It looks as if the mission of Ibrik-Tepe was to give a pionéer like you to the Albanian Renaissance. Once our village had fulfilled that mission,"
it disappeared from the map as an Albanian settlement in Thrace.”

CONSTANTINOPLE

The conductor announced a station near Constantinople. By that time Fan Noli was tortured by high fever and hallucinations. Two ugly demons with the traditional horns and tails had grabbed him by each arm and were swinging him in an effort to throw him into a flaming oven. Curiously enough, those two demons had a striking resemblance to two members of the Gymnasium School Board of Adrianople. On the other hand, the oven was exactly like the one at home in which the Noli family baked bread and *bostantacavas*. Fan Noli was not sure whether he was dreaming. What he saw was extremely confusing. He was sure he was no longer in Ḳbrī'-Tepe in front of the old oven. He was also sure he was not in Adrianople. He knew that his troubles with the school board had been settled, and he could not see why those two demons were starting the story all over again. But here they were, vigorously trying to throw him into the oven. As a matter of fact, his head was actually burning, as if flames really enveloped him.

Nevertheless, the demons could not manage to throw him into the oven. Two sweet angels held him by the feet and pulled him in the opposite direction. One of them looked like his grandmother and the other like his mother. Yet they could not have been his mother and grandmother. They had real, angelic wings and beautiful radiant faces. Both of them were shouting to the demons to let the boy loose. But the demons refused to let him go. On the contrary, they were pulling him nearer and nearer the open fire. Fan Noli thought that it was the end.

Suddenly another angel appeared with features similar
to those of Big Brother Dimitri. Yes, it was certainly Dimitri. He held in his hand the very bucket with which he had won the contest at the well. Dimitri poured the bucket of water over his brother's burning head. Fan Noli was shocked and refreshed by the cold water.

At that moment Fan Noli opened his eyes and was surprised that there were no demons, no angels, and no oven around. There was only a train compartment with three other fellow passengers. One of them had a glass of water in his hand and offered it to him saying: “Here is a glass of water for you. You were screaming for it in your dream.” Fan Noli drank the glass of water and felt very much better.

The conductor shouted: “Constantinople! Istanbul! Last stop! All out!” Fan Noli tried painfully to get on his feet. He could not. He fell back on his seat. The passenger who had given him a glass of water said: “This is the last stop. We all have to get out of the train.” Fan Noli made a gesture which meant that he could not move. The three passengers helped him out. Then they called the first policeman who was in sight, and told him that the young man should be taken to the hospital immediately, because he had had a high fever all night.

Soon an ambulance came. Fan Noli was put on a stretcher and pushed into the ambulance. After half an hour of bumping and jolting the ambulance reached the hospital. Fan Noli, still on the stretcher, was taken up to the second floor of a large building and put to bed. A doctor and a nurse came to see him. The doctor, after a short examination, diagnosed his sickness as Fan Noli’s old friend, the intermittent fever. The doctor added that the patient should stay in the hospital for at least three weeks.

Fan Noli did. The crisis came at the end of the second
week. It was again a nightmare, and much worse than the one on the train. This time the scene was quite different. It was in a wooded area with Wotan, the chief of the Germanic gods, and Lohe, the god of fire, on one side and Brünnhilde on the other. Lohe made a circle of fire all around the wooded area to protect Brünnhilde from an intruder. Incidentally, Lohe bound Fan Noli to a tree splashed him with kerosene, and set him on fire. Fan Noli felt that he was burning and yet still remained alive. But the heat became intolerable.

Fan Noli shouted to Wotan that he had committed no crime whatever for which he should be punished along with Brünnhilde. Wotan retorted angrily: “Yes, Brünnhilde disobeyed me, and you disobeyed your teachers in Adrianople.”

Fan Noli felt that this time he was really lost. But just then Big Brother Dimitri appeared, again with his famous bucket. Immediately he began throwing water on his brother to put out the fire which had enveloped him and the tree. Then who should appear but Captain Gerda, with another bucket to help Dimitri? But his bucket was full of raki, and not water. And the white raki made the fire worse. On the other hand, the pungent fumes of the raki woke Fan Noli up. When he opened his eyes, there was no Wotan, no Lohe, no Brünnhilde, no Dimitri, no Gerda, and no flaming forest.

The doctor and the nurse came to take his temperature. The doctor smiled and said: “I think you are out of the woods now. You will be able to leave the hospital in a week or so.”

After a three weeks stay, Fan Noli said good-bye to the nurse and the doctor who saved him from that horrible fiend, the intermittent fever. It was the first and last time
that Fan Noli was ever in the hospital. He left with the little bundle containing all his worldly possessions slung over his shoulder. He hired a bed in a miserable inn, where he shared a small room with three other wretched fellows. He could not stay in that ill-smelling room very long. He went out to take some fresh air.

He availed himself of this opportunity to visit the Church of Saint Sophia, which had been turned into a mosque. Before entering he took off his shoes, as all the others did, and began his inspection of the vast building. While he was gazing up at the lofty domes and admiring them, he suddenly got dizzy and collapsed on the floor. Some Moslem worshippers helped him to his feet and led him out of the building.

The fresh air soon revived him. Fan Noli wandered aimlessly through the city, and before he knew it, was lost in the meandering streets of Old Constantinople. After several hours of inquiring and wandering, he finally found himself on the Galata Bridge, which connects the old city with the new one. While he was walking across the bridge, Fan Noli counted his pennies and figured out that he had enough money to pay for his rent and his meals for about two days more. What would he do on the third day? He raised his eyes to heaven, hoping that Saint George would help him out of his difficulties.

St. George did. A young man approached him and asked: “Is it you or somebody else?” Fan Noli answered: “It’s me.” He recognized an old classmate of the Adrianople Gymnasium. He told him of his troubles. The young man said: “Cheer up. If you are willing to work I have a job for you at my uncle’s candy store. They need a helper.”

The two young men went to the candy store. The owner immediately engaged Fan Noli. There was no salary, but
Fan Noli could sleep in the basement of the store, and have his meals with his classmate. He also enjoyed the right to eat as much candy as he wanted.

This temporary solution was satisfactory in so far as it saved Fan Noli from starvation. But Fan Noli felt that Divine Providence had created him for a higher calling than stirring up cauldrons of boiling candy or cutting the big chunks of candy into small pieces. That thought made him very unhappy. As a matter of fact, one day after eating an enormous amount of candy, he had some terrible convulsions which sent him to bed for a few days. When he recovered, he swore solemnly that he would always follow Grandmother Sumba’s example and never touch store candy again.

Every morning when Fan Noli got up, he made the three great prostrations with forehead on the floor, as his grandmother used to make them, and ended with this prayer: “Lord Jesus, Mary Mother of God, and Mighty Saint George, save me from these candy cauldrons.”

They did. One day, again on the Galata Bridge, while he was looking up to heaven for help, a bearded clergyman approached him and asked: “Is it you or am I seeing a vision?” Fan Noli answered: “It’s me all right.” He also rubbed his eyes to make sure that the person he saw in front of him was really his good old professor, Father Nicholas Athanasiadis. Yes, it really was his old professor.

That solved Fan Noli’s problem. The professor bought his boat ticket for Athens, gave him a large bundle of provisions and fruit to eat on the ship, and added a generous sum of money to tide him over a while in Athens. The good professor, when he took leave of him, said: “Don’t hesitate to write me from Athens for more money if you need it.” Fan Noli kissed his hand with tears in
his eyes and said good-bye to him. He never saw him again.

Aboard the ship he thought how hard it must have been for Professor Athanasiadis to make this heavy financial sacrifice for him. By this time he had seven daughters, some of them of marriageable age. To marry off a daughter in Constantinople meant hundreds of dollars in cash to the bridegroom, besides the traditional trousseau and other wedding expenses. In Constantinople boys were at a premium, not girls as in Ibrik-Tepe. The professor had confided to Fan Noli that he hoped to live long enough to make the necessary money to marry off all his daughters before he died. He added that the day he married off his youngest daughter he would be ready to say, like Simeon in Saint Luke’s Gospel: “Now dismiss, Oh Lord, thy servant in peace.”

THEATRE

Fan Noli reached Athens after a day’s journey from Constantinople. It was a city of dust and heat. The Acropolis and other ancient ruins did nothing to relieve the situation.

The first thing Fan Noli did was to go to the office of Athanasius Ioannidis, a teacher of Turkish, to whom he had a letter of introduction. The good teacher got him a job immediately with a Belgian company which was running the Athenian trolley system. His job consisted in cracking the whip in the air and encouraging two wretched, scrawny horses to pull the trolley from one end of Athens to the other. At the end of the line Fan Noli had to unhitch the horses from one end of the trolley car and hitch them up to the other end. Then he cracked the whip again, and off they started in the opposite direction. This shuttling back and forth lasted about twelve hours. It was a long
monotonous day, which was made worse by the oppressive heat and the eternal dust.

It was quite clear that Fan Noli could not keep that job very long. One day he saw an advertisement in a local paper that a copyist was wanted by a playwright named Kamburoglou. Fan Noli went straight to his home. The job consisted in writing down a comedy dictated by the author. At the end of the comedy the job would end also. Fan Noli did not hesitate a second. He threw away his horsewhip and snatched up the copyist's pen. Any employment connected with the theatre was more interesting to him than the trolley job, no matter how temporary or how poorly paid it might be.

The comedy was the drowsiest Fan Noli had ever come across. But the author was a very kindly man. Moreover, he was well satisfied with Fan Noli's handwriting. He had the surprise of his life when he noticed that the spelling was correct from beginning to end. His surprise was quite natural. The orthography of modern Greek is not phonetic, but historical, and much more difficult than English. For instance, the sound "ee" is rendered in five different ways. The same thing is true of other vowel sounds and diphthongs.

In about six weeks the copying was over. Then Kamburoglou gave the young copyist a letter of introduction to a theatrical company which needed poorly paid helpers for copying the actors' parts. Fan Noli accepted the job, although it gave him hardly enough to pay for his meals and his bed rent in a room which he shared with other poor young men working in the same theatre. He was soon promoted to the better paid job of prompter (souffleur).

He was highly qualified for the job. He had been
prompting ever since he had been able to read. He used

to help his father as a canonarch in the church. He had
to intone softly the text of every anthem before his father
charted it. The old-fashioned Protestants of England and
the United States used to have this traditional prompting,
which they called "lining out." In Adrianople he did more
extensive prompting for the First Cantor of the Cathedral,
who taught Byzantine Music at the Gymnasium. Last but
not least, he had done some prompting with the theatrical
companies which visited Adrianople during his four years
of study there.

Soon Fan Noli stepped up from the position of
prompter to that of substitute actor. This is how it
happened: The actor who was supposed to play a certain
part was sick in bed. Fan Noli volunteered at the last
minute to replace him. He played his part to the full
satisfaction of the company's director. It was not very hard
to please him. Most of the actors never bothered about
memorizing their parts decently. Fan Noli knew every play
by heart, as he had prompted it dozens of times. Moreover,
he used to help actors in memorizing their parts. After this
initial success, the director seized every occasion to employ
Fan Noli, not only as a substitute, but as a regular actor.

Everybody seemed to like Fan Noli. There was an
excellent reason for it. They were helpless without him,
and he was always ready to do his best to help them. He
certainly was a successful prompter. He kept the same job
for three years, until he gave it up as hopeless. He had
always loved dramatic art. He had appreciated good
literature ever since he was a youngster. That was why he
had been such a good audience for Captain Gerda's
dramatic and hair-raising stories.

Fan Noli served as a prompter in the theatrica'
companies of Pantopoulos, Lalaounis, and Tavullaris successively from 1900 until 1903. He worked with them in Athens and Corinth, Greece; Constantinople and Ponte-Iraklia (Zonguldak) on the Black Sea coast in Turkey; and finally in Alexandria, Egypt.

The repertory included all the plays which were popular at that time in Europe. Shakespeare and Ibsen, of course, came first. All the actresses and actors, including Fan Noli, the prompter, were dreaming of playing the leading parts in them.

The way the plays were presented to the Greek public was rather curious. For instance, after the third act of "Hamlet," the actor who played Hamlet and the actress who played Ophelia would come out on the stage without changing costumes and sing some commonplace duet which happened to be popular, something like Frank Sinatra's crooning. This crooning is all right in its place but it would not fit after the third act of "Hamlet."

And what followed after the last act of "Hamlet?" A worthless one-act comedy. Years after, Fan Noli was reminded of this absurd and incongruous combination when Bernard Shaw's "Misalliance" was played in Boston. At the end of the play an announcement was made that the public would be served an extra dessert in the form of an act from a Gilbert and Sullivan opera! The leading actor performed it without changing costume. The best way to kill Shakespeare, Ibsen, Shaw or any other first-class playwright, is just to follow that classical Greek example, which that American actor was trying to revive.

Why was that done? The director of the theatrical company gave this explanation: "The public would not stand the terrible tragedy of Hamlet without some light music between acts and a refreshing comedy at the end."
After all, that was exactly what the ancient Greeks used to do. A short comedy always followed a tragedy. Moreover, the leading actor or actress would always sing a solo (monody), a sort of musical monologue.

What was the salary paid to those actors? There was no fixed salary. They were paid the price of the transportation to the city where they would give performances. Then they were supposed to receive a small percentage from the net profits of the company. The net profits were what remained after the deduction of expenses. The deductions consisted of fare for transportation, rent of theatre, salaries of theatre factotums, charges for use of theatrical costumes and other accessories, etc., etc., etc.

The percentages were distributed to actors who were grouped into three categories. The first class actors used to get 8% of the net profits, the second class actors 6%, and the third class actors 4%. Those percentages took the place of a salary. As a rule there was little left to give to the actors. Fan Noli, who was classified in the first category, never had enough to pay for his board and the rent of a bed in the room he shared with other actors. At the end of the season the only one who could ever afford to pay his transportation back to Athens was the director of the company, and a rare actor who happened to have money of his own. All the others were stranded in whatever city they happened to be. They had to wait there starving until they received an offer and the price of a ticket from some theatrical manager.

Fan Noli was always among those stranded. On those occasions he would think of good old Grandmother Sunba, who had taught him to fast three days without water. This time he was allowed to drink as much water as he wanted.

The worst of all the theatrical disasters was that of
Ponto-Iraklia (Zonguldak), Turkey, and that of Alexandria, Egypt. The company's director had been badly misinformed as to the possibilities of Ponto-Iraklia on the Black Sea coast of Asiatic Turkey. The receipts of the first performance showed that the whole thing would be a ghastly failure. Two weeks after the first performance the company's director ran away in the night, leaving his actors and actresses stranded in that hopeless town. The actors had to shift for themselves and give performances in a dingy hall to keep alive.

It was in the midst of that misery that Fan Noli realized the brightest dream of every actor. The star of the company, who used to play the part of Hamlet, and the leading lady who used to play the part of Ophelia, both were sick in bed from starvation and exhaustion. The problem was whether to postpone the performance or go ahead with it. The consensus was to go ahead with the performance by all means, and get a few pennies with which to buy food and keep alive for a few more days.

Fan Noli was asked whether or not he would take the place of the star and play Hamlet. He was delighted by the suggestion, and accepted without hesitation. After all, he knew the part better than any star he had ever prompted.

The trouble came when they began to search for a substitute for Ophelia. There was only one person who was still on her feet. Her name was Caliroe. She was lame, and had never in her life appeared before the footlights, not even in a minor role. She accompanied her sister, who was the leading lady. Nobody imagined that the poor creature had ever entertained the ambition of playing the role of Ophelia. The unexpected happened. When the lame girl was offered the part of Ophelia, she could hardly believe her ears. The moment she made sure that the part
of Ophelia was really being offered to her, she had the thrill of her life. She confessed that she had secretly been preparing for that part all her life.

So the tragedy of Hamlet was performed the very next evening in this improvised fashion and had an enormous success. No one in the audience suspected that the actress playing Ophelia was lame. She was placed on a chair and played the part sitting. Fan Noli, as Hamlet, did his best to prevent the audience from noticing that something was wrong with Ophelia. Since Hamlet is supposed to be half mad, Fan Noli made all kinds of pirouettes around the chair to emphasize that point. Ophelia was directed to follow his movements with her eyes in utter amazement.

The same technique was used in the scene where the mad Ophelia distributes flowers. The Queen, Laertes, and other courtiers circled around Ophelia in excitement. Thus they diverted the attention of the public from the sitting Ophelia: Moreover, the most extraordinary thing about her performance was that she needed no prompting at all. Everyone in the theatrical troupe unanimously agreed that they had never before seen a leading actor or a leading actress who had memorized their parts so perfectly, and played them so excellently. Both Fan Noli and Caliroe got a tremendous ovation. Years later he was reminded of the lame Caliroe when he saw the aging Sarah Bernhardt giving a marvelous performance with her voice, her face, and her arms though she could hardly stand on her feet.

Fan Noli never had the chance to play Hamlet again. The highly talented Caliroe probably never appeared before the public again either. But their successful performance helped the company to stage some more performances and survive until rescue came.

About two weeks later a freighter carrying bones for
fertilizer was forced by a storm to take refuge in the port of Ponto-Iraklia. Its merciful captain was touched by the misery of those emaciated artists, some of whom had been reduced to skin and bones. He offered them free meals and free transportation for the two-day journey to Constantinople. Most of them were so weak that they had to lie down during the voyage, until the kindly sailors revived them with food. That was what was needed to cure them and put them on their feet again.

The final catastrophe came in Alexandria. After three weeks of performances which brought in very little money, the company’s director ran away, again leaving the actors and actresses to shift for themselves. All performances were cancelled because the terrified actors and actresses left for Athens one after another on the first ships they could get. Fan Noli concluded that this was the end of his theatrical career. There was no sense in sticking to a profession that took him from one end of the Mediterranean to the other with starvation threatening him at every port. The parting from the theatre was heartbreakingly inevitable. Deeply depressed, he took leave of the theatre, of all his colleagues, and his two good friends, Venieris of Crete and Apostolos of Athens.

Apostolos of Athens was a highly educated man, with whom Fan Noli spent all his leisure hours discussing dramatic art and world literature. He was a short, lean, and sickly-looking man with finely chiseled features. In spite of his intelligence and his ability, he could get only insignificant parts. Only young men looking like Adonis and young ladies looking like Venus had a chance of being hired by the casting directors of those primitive theatrical companies. The great, angular, scrawny Katharine Hepburn would have been dismissed with a contemptuous gesture.
So Apostolos left the theatre and became a first-class newspaper correspondent.

Venieris of Crete stuck to the theatre to the bitter end. In real life he was a kindly man who would share his last penny with a colleague in need. But on the stage he loved to play villains and scoundrels, exactly like the sweet Mary Pickford who dreamt of playing vampires. He would not accept any theatrical engagement unless he had a monopoly on the villain parts.

Once he approached Fan Noli and asked him to translate Ibsen’s “An Enemy of the People” for him. The latter was astonished. He pointed out that Dr. Stockman, who is proclaimed “an enemy of the people” by his own fellow townsman was not a villain at all. On the contrary, he was an idealist who wanted to improve the sanitary conditions of his home town. Venieris answered: “Fanatical idealists like Brutus in Shakespeare’s ‘Julius Caesar,’ and Dr. Stockman in Ibsen’s ‘Enemy of the People’ are the most cruel of all men. They are always ready to sacrifice what is dearest to them on the altar of their ideal. That’s why I love to play idealists like Brutus and Dr. Stockman, who in real life prove to be the worst of all villains.”

Fan Noli translated Ibsen’s “An Enemy of the People” into Greek and handed it to Venieris. He never met Venieris again and never knew whether or not he played the leading role in Ibsen’s play.

The last days of Fan Noli’s stay in Alexandria were unspeakably dreary. He had to sleep in a huge hall containing from fifty to sixty beds which were aligned in two long rows against the walls, with an aisle running between them. The rent was a few nickels a night, but it was not easy for him to pay it. It was a miracle that he could sleep
at all in that hall when the inmates began to snore and roar in their nightmares.

Saint George saved Fan Noli in a few weeks from this ill-smelling chamber of torture. One morning he saw in the local paper an advertisement in which a cantor and teacher was wanted in Shibin-el-Kom. He wrote immediately to the address given and got the job, which marked a decisive turning point in his life.

EGYPT

The journey from Alexandria to Shibin-el-Kom by train took four hours. During this trip Fan Noli drew up the balance sheet of his theatrical career. He concluded that during those three years of wandering and starving, he had obtained an excellent education in dramatic literature. Moreover, as a prompter and as an actor, he had acquired an excellent training in the technique of public speaking. This was to help him enormously in his preaching later.

Immediately after his arrival in Shibin-el-Kom, Fan Noli got in touch with the chairman and the pastor of the Greek Orthodox Church of Shibin-el-Kom, Father Nilos Petrides from the Island of Icaria, near Cyprus. He had to prove to the chairman and the pastor that he was qualified for the position of grammar school teacher and cantor. He was pronounced fully qualified for the post after he showed them his Certificate of Graduation from the Gymnasium of Adrianople, and passed successfully an hour’s examination in Byzantine chanting.

His job consisted primarily in chanting, not only on Sundays, but every week day. Father Nilos was a monk who had services every morning and every evening the year around. During the twenty years he had spent in a
monastery on the Island of Icaria, he had become an expert in Byzantine chanting. Under him Fan Noli received a more advanced education in Byzantine music during his two years stay in Shibin-el-Kom from 1903 to 1905. Father Nilos helped Fan Noli, not only as a good teacher, but also as a good friend. He was an excellent cook, and very often shared his meals with him.

So far as the grammar school was concerned, Fan Noli felt that he could not make much headway with the pupils he had. All of them were big boys and girls who spoke only Arabic and showed no inclination at all to learn Greek, which was their parents’ language. Fan Noli learned a good deal of Arabic from them, but the pupils did not learn much Greek from him. All they could learn from him was elementary Greek reading, conversational Greek, the chanting of church anthems, and the singing of folk songs. The school board did not expect more, and seemed to be satisfied with these results.

Here in Shibin-el-Kom, in 1903, for the first time in his life, Fan Noli met an active pioneer of the Albanian Renaissance movement in the person of Spiro Dine. Ever since 1896 Fan Noli had been trying frantically to get in touch with the various Albanian Committees and their leaders, about whom he had read in the Greek papers. He started with Nicholas Nacho, President of the Dituria Society who, since 1888, had been publishing the newspaper “Dituria” (Learning) in Bucharest, Roumania. In 1897, from Adrianople, Fan Noli at the age of fifteen had written him a letter requesting a copy of his paper. He never received an answer. Very probably the Turkish censor had not permitted the letter to go through, because Albanian publications were not allowed in Turkey.

Again in 1901, Fan Noli had written from Athens to
Faik Konitza, who was publishing his magazine “Albania,” in Brussels, Belgium. He asked Konitza whether he needed an assistant for his publication. Konitza did not answer by letter, but he inserted a few lines in his “Personal Correspondence” column at the end of the next issue of his magazine, to the effect that Fan Noli would be more useful doing propaganda work among the Albanians there in Athens. Curiously enough, Fan Noli did not read this answer until about six years later in Boston, Massachusetts, where he happened to come across the above-mentioned issue. As a matter of fact, years afterward, Konitza told Fan Noli that he actually did need an assistant very badly, but he could not trust a correspondent from Athens about whom he knew nothing. All the other patriotic Albanians whom Fan Noli tried to contact by letter reacted similarly.

Finally, after seven years of vain searching, Fan Noli found what he was looking for. Spiro Dine had been active in the Albanian movement ever since he was a young man. He had assisted Ethim Mitko in compiling his marvellous collection of Albanian folk songs, “Mbleta Shkiptare,” (The Albanian Bee), published in Cairo in 1878. Now he himself was compiling another collection, “Valet e Detit,” (Waves of the Sea). He had a rich library consisting of practically all the Albanian books which had ever been published. He lent all those books to Fan Noli, who read them eagerly.

Now, at last, at the age of 21, Fan Noli learned what was being done in the Albanian world. There was practically no organization worth its name doing systematic work. There were only a few isolated Albanian patriots who were working as individuals. Two of the most prominent among them were Nicholas Nacho and Faik Konitza, whom we have mentioned before. There were two others, Shahin
Kolonia and Kristo Luaraši, who were publishing the newspaper "Drita" and an annual Albanian calendar in Sofia, Bulgaria.

All the patriotic societies in Albania and Turkey had gone underground and practically died out, on account of the Turkish persecutions. Possession of an Albanian publication was considered subversive and meant imprisonment or exile. Albanians outside of Turkey were free to organize themselves, and they actually founded some organizations which published Albanian literature. But these organizations disappeared because they found very few supporters. The reason was that all of them wanted to go back some day to Albania, which was then under Turkish rule, and they did not want to be branded as subversive.

Moreover, as we have explained before, Orthodox Albanian patriots, were also persecuted by the Greek Patriarchate of Constantinople through excommunications. This was due to the fact that the Greek Patriarchate has always been a department of the Greek government, and persecuted the Albanians as ruthlessly as Turkey did. Their policy was to Hellenize the Orthodox Albanians through their schools and their churches, and to annex Southern Albania where the Orthodox element predominated.

The two years in Shibin-el-Kom passed peacefully and quietly. At the end of his second and last year in Shibin-el-Kom, Fan Noli asked the advice of his friend, Father Nilos, as to what he should do about an old engagement. During his studies at the Gymnasium in Adrianople Fan Noli had met a young lady of his own age, Euthalia, the sister of Athanasius Ioannidis of Athens, whom we have mentioned before. The episode was of an old-fashioned, puritanical character. Fan Noli was a bashful peasant boy and Euthalia would not so much as smile at a boy without the
permission of her brother. It was unthinkable for the youngsters to entertain any idea of marriage during his Gymnasium course or his wanderings with theatrical companies.

But now Fan Noli had a steady job, with a decent salary of which he could save half every month. So Father Nilos told him that it was not fair to keep the girl waiting any longer. Fan Noli followed his advice, took the next ship to Athens, and went straight to Athanasius Ioannidis to tell him the purpose of his visit. Athanasius had mistrusted Fan Noli ever since he had given up a good, steady job with the Belgian trolley company for a temporary job as copyist for Kamburoglou and the risky job of prompter with traveling theatrical companies. As he did not want his sister to starve, he wanted to make sure that Fan Noli would stick to this good, respectable job of teaching and chanting. So he asked Theophan what his plans for the future were. Would he continue teaching in Egypt or would he go to some other country to try his fortune? Theophan answered that he was planning to go to the United States and look for a better job there. That settled the question for Ioannidis. He said: "Only an adventurer would go to the United States, and I would never allow my sister to marry an adventurer!"

Euthalia and her mother tried in vain to make Athanasius change his mind. Athanasius did not budge. There was another solution: a prearranged abduction as it was practiced in Ibrik-Tepe. But Euthalia would not agree to such a thing without the consent of her brother. In the opinion of both Father Nilos and Fan Noli, there was nothing else to be done about it, and that ended the affair.

Before the end of the second school year in Shibin-el-
Kom, in March 1905, Fan Noli was offered a higher salary as a teacher and cantor in Fayoum, five hours south of Cairo by train. He applied for the position and got it. On his way to his new post he again drew up the balance sheet of his two years in Shibin-el-Kom. He had obtained a thorough training in Byzantine chanting, which was to be most helpful to him later on.

In Fayoum he had the opportunity to meet two enthusiastic pioneers of the Albanian Renaissance movement, Thanas Tashko and John Vruho, both of them restaurant keepers. They spent all the money they could save on the Albanian cause. They published for three years, from 1906 to 1909, a newspaper called "Shkopi" (The Rod), in which they championed the cause of Albanian independence, and which they distributed free of charge. They also published at their own expense Sami Frasher’s "Albania," which Fan Noli translated for them from Albanian into Greek. The reason for this translation was that a good many Albanians had been educated in Greek schools and found it easier to read Greek than their mother tongue.

Tashko and Vruho advised Fan Noli to go to America and organize the Albanian immigrants there. They promised to defray his traveling expenses. Fan Noli consented, and made ready to leave for America at the end of the school year. Jamestown, New York, was decided upon as his destination, because in 1905 an Albanian society called "Malli i Memedheut" (Love of Homeland), had been organized in that city by Petro Nini Luarasi, another enthusiastic pioneer. Moreover, both the vice-president of the society, Vani Karameta, and the treasurer, Vani Vangel had worked in Tashko's restaurant there in Fayoum. They felt sure that these two young men would help Fan Noli start his mission in the United States.
BIOGRAPHY OF FAN STYLIAN NOLI

Fan Noli's employment in Fayoum was similar to that in Shibin-el-Kom, with the same type of pupils and the same kind of problems. The one-room school was located between the church and the parish house. The pastor and the chairman of the church committee were kindly men with whom it was very easy to get along. The year passed pleasantly and uneventfully until March, 1906.

Then a complication arose. One day Fan Noli was absorbed in reading Flaubert's "Madame Bovary," with the book resting on the low window-sill of the school-room. Suddenly a hand was stretched out on the book and interrupted his reading. He looked up and there was Cassandra, the niece of the chairman of the school committee, a pretty, slim brunette. She chided him: "Haven't you got eyes for anything but those French books?" He was embarrassed and didn't know what to say. The young lady continued: "The pastor is giving a party at the parish house this afternoon and he wants you to come and have a cup of coffee with him."

He did attend this party. Some more similar parties were given, primarily to make him acquainted with Cassandra. She was certainly a very attractive young lady. But Fan Noli deep in his heart felt that he was already committed to the cause of Albania, and that he should devote all his energies to this mission before thinking of anything else. Therefore he gave no encouragement whatever to Cassandra or the pastor, who was promoting the match. As a matter of fact, he told the pastor that the good-looking young lady could very easily get a good husband among the well-to-do bachelor business men of Fayoum.

Cassandra did get a very well-to-do business man. The pastor and Cassandra's uncle found him for her and advised her to accept him, although he was thirty years older than
she was. Her position was very difficult. She was an orphan and had been brought up in the home of her uncle, who already had nine daughters of his own, and was still getting an additional daughter every year. Cassandra felt that she was a burden to this good and prolific uncle, so she thought it was her duty to move out of the overcrowded house.

She was married in April and Fan Noli chanted at the ceremony. The bride had dark circles under her eyes and looked as if she had been weeping for days. It seemed more like a funeral than a wedding.

This incident was decisive in Fan Noli's life. His friends, Tashko and Vruho, thought that he should be saved by all means for the cause of Albania. They did not want to take the slightest chance of having another brunette get him. They insisted that he should resign before the end of the school year and take the next boat for the United States. A meeting was arranged for this very purpose. The day after the meeting Fan Noli tendered his resignation to the school board. Two days later he left for Alexandria, boarded the first ship to Naples, and there took a German Lloyd ship to New York.

It is customary in Albania not to sleep on the eve of the departure of a member of the family on a long journey. The idea is that they may never see the dear person again. So they want to see as much of him as possible, perhaps for the last time, before he leaves. Tashko and Vruho gave such an all-night farewell party for Fan Noli. They spent the whole night talking about their hopes for a free Albania, her future form of government, frontiers, hostile neighbors, economic development, everything as they had dreamed of it. It was dawn before they knew it. Early in the morning Fan Noli took leave of his friends. They were right. They never met again.
Charter Members of Malii i Momihent (Love of Homeland), Jamestown, N. Y., 1905. Second Row, seated, left to right:
VANI KARAMETE, Vice-Chairman, PETRO LUARASI, VANI VANGEI, Treasurer.
On May 10, 1906, at the age of twenty-four, Fan Noli landed in New York. As he had passed his physical examination in Naples, Italy, before embarking, he was admitted to the United States after answering a few routine questions. At that time there were practically no other restrictions for immigrants. New York City impressed him very favorably because huge bananas were sold by street peddlers at three for five cents. The first thing he did was to buy three bananas for his first American breakfast.

The same evening he took the train for Buffalo, New York, where he arrived the following morning with five dollars in his pocket. From the station he went straight to the home of Vani Vangel, 431 Genesee Street. He could not find him there, because Vani had already gone to his factory to work. He met him in the evening. Vani, the treasurer of “Malli i Memedheut,” explained that this society was very small and that its finances were so low that it would be unable to promote any extensive activity. Then and there it was decided that, for the time being, Fan Noli should get a job in a factory. He was very fortunate and did get work as an unskilled laborer in a sawmill. His work consisted in picking up the big logs, feeding them into the mill, and carrying the planks where they were needed. He worked nine hours a day with half an hour’s recess for lunch. The salary was four dollars a week, which was considered pretty good for those days. He slept in a room which he shared with nine other fellow-laborers. This was an improvement on the Alexandrian dormitory hall, which he had shared with sixty others. He was so tired in the evening that he fell asleep the minute he stretched out on his back.

By this time Fan Noli had a clear idea of the tre-
mendous problems he faced. He had to unify the amorphous masses of the Albanians, who were divided into three major denominations, namely, Moslem, Orthodox, and Roman Catholic. He had to raise money from poor working men who, like all Albanians, were thriftier than the proverbial Scotchman. He had to find an acceptable leader for them, and that leader could not expect an adequate salary to make a living. He had to emancipate the Albanian Orthodox Church from the clutches of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, which had ruled it for about twelve centuries. He had to liberate about two million Albanians from the Turkish Empire, which had a population of over sixty million. He had to win the sympathy of the Great Powers of Europe, who were overwhelmingly Christian, for the Albanians, who were overwhelmingly Moslem, and were hated as unspeakable Turks. He had to win the support of the public opinion of the world, and he had no means to influence it except with a couple of Albanian magazines which very few non-Albanians read. What was worse, he had to reach the Albanians themselves, and the Albanians could not read Albanian!

Anyone else would have given up the job as hopeless. Not Fan Noli. He argued the case with himself as he had been taught by his father and his uncle back in Ibrîk-Tepe: What would Napoleon do in this case? Well, nothing would have stopped Napoleon. The British fleet did not stop him when he went to Egypt and when he ran the British blockade on his return to France.

What would Scanderbeg do in this case? Nothing would have stopped him either. The greatest armies of the time led by the two greatest Sultans of Turkey had not stopped him. With his tiny army of apocalyptic horsemen, he would go forward against all the powers of hell.
What would Jesus do in this case? Neither the Roman generals nor the Jewish theologians could stop him. He would go forward to the Cross, which he considered as his greatest triumph, and of which St. Paul was always proud.

Yes, they all agreed, Napoleon, Scanderbeg, and Jesus. The vote was unanimous. So forward Fan Noli went, hoping against hope, trusting in God and in the righteousness of the cause he was championing.

Fan Noli kept his job in the Buffalo lumber mill for about three months. He gave it up when Sotir Petsi, one of the great pioneers of the Albanian Renaissance, offered him the job of assistant editor and factotum of the weekly newspaper “Kombi” (The Nation), which he had started to publish in Boston on June 6, 1906. There was no salary for this work, but Sotir Petsi hoped that he would be able to pay Fan Noli’s rent in a room which he shared with a friend and his meals at an Albanian restaurant on Pleasant Street, near Park Square.

“Kombi” was printed in a dingy basement which also served as the business office at 100 Hudson Street. It was cold and damp, because the old-fashioned stove produced more smoke than heat. It was rumored among Albanians that Sotir Petsi and Fan Noli between them had only one overcoat and that they took turns wearing it. That is not true. Neither of them had an overcoat, as they both came from a warm climate where an overcoat was not needed. As they could not afford to buy overcoats, they kept warm by wearing two sweaters, one on top of the other.

Fan Noli and another patriotic young Albanian, Efthim Natsi, set the type and printed the paper on a press run by foot, not electric power. The machinery and the
type were bought by Sotir Petsi on easy monthly payments, which were very hard to pay.

Consequently, Fan Noli was sent to the various Albanian communities in New Hampshire and Maine to get some new subscriptions, in order to pay the current bills. Fan Noli visited Manchester, Concord, and Penacook, New Hampshire, Biddeford, Saco, Augusta, and Rockland, Maine. The subscription drive was a failure. Most of the Albanian immigrants could not read Albanian because no Albanian schools were allowed in Albania by the Turkish Government. After deducting his traveling expenses, the money Fan Noli brought to Petsi amounted to about $15.00. Subscription drives in other Albanian communities in Massachusetts and Rhode Island were equally unsuccessful. At the end of those drives Fan Noli saw that Petsi, the editor, could not pay for his own living expenses, much less for those of an assistant editor. So he resigned. That was the end of his first journalistic career. It lasted about ten months.

The problem was now to get a job in a factory again. It was almost impossible to find a day job. There were long lines of applicants at the door of every factory. A foreman would look up and down the lines and pick out a few who looked strongest and huskiest. Fan Noli was never picked out. Then one of his fellow applicants told him he would have a better chance of getting a night job. Fan Noli followed his advice and got a night job with the American Can Company. He ran a machine which stamped the labels on the cans. He worked from 8 P.M. to 5 A.M. for five dollars a week. He did not like that job because he never succeeded in sleeping well in the daytime. Nevertheless, he would have kept the job indefinitely for lack of a better one. But a fellow-worker next to him had
a terrible accident one night. While he was dozing, his hand got caught in the machine. When the foreman heard his screams, he stopped the machine and tried to extricate him. Before he could do it, the poor laborer’s arm was so mangled that it had to be amputated up to the shoulder.

Fan Noli gave up the job the next day, six months after he had obtained it. He was sure that if he continued in it he had a very good chance of losing both his arms. He used to nap and doze every night. Moreover, lulled by the whirring of the machinery, he had long, pleasant dreams. As a rule the foreman would interrupt his dreams every night by shaking him and shouting, “Wake up!”

Soon after that incident another pioneer of the Albanian Renaissance, Bayo Topulli, came to Boston to give a series of lectures to the Albanians in the United States. As he did not know a word of English, he engaged Fan Noli to help him during his tour. This job consisted in ordering food at a restaurant, renting a room at the hotel, calling a taxi, and buying a ticket at the station. Fan Noli did not receive any salary for this work, but his meals and room rent were paid by his employer. The tour lasted about three months. Then Bayo Topulli returned to Europe and Fan Noli was again without a job.

ORDINATION

In 1907 Christo Thimi Dishnitza, a young man, died in Hudson, Massachusetts. Efforts to secure an Orthodox priest for the funeral services were unsuccessful. The Greek priest refused to officiate on the ground that the young man was an Albanian patriot and as such was automatically excommunicated. There was no other Orthodox priest available in the vicinity. So the young man was buried without any religious service. This incident aroused the
RUSSIAN CATHEDRAL OF ST. NICHOLAS, 15 East 97 Street, New York City, N. Y.,
where Fan Noli was ordained as priest in 1908.
Albanians of Massachusetts, who called a meeting and decided to have an Albanian priest ordained. They invited Fan Noli to undertake this mission.

He accepted immediately because that would give him the opportunity to work for the cause of Albania, an opportunity he had been seeking for ten years, since 1897. He went straight to New York City to see whether Archbishop Platon, head of the Russian Orthodox Church in the United States, would ordain him. Fan Noli explained the matter to the Dean of the Cathedral, the Very Rev. Father Alexander Hotovitzky. The latter promised to refer the matter to Archbishop Platon at the earliest opportunity.

At that time the Archbishop happened to be at the Russian Monastery of South Canaan, Pennsylvania, and was expected to return to New York in about ten days. Fan Noli had arrived in New York with six dollars in his pocket, and that was not enough to keep him alive until the Archbishop’s return. Fortunately, a friend, Frederick Rutland, offered to share his room with him on East 125th Street. Another friend, Pali Chili, the owner of an Albanian restaurant on West 42nd Street, offered him free meals. Fan Noli wanted to save the six dollars for his return fare to Boston and for any emergency. So he had to walk ninety blocks in order to get his free meals. By the time he had walked the ninety blocks back to his room he was hungry again.

After ten days of walking one hundred and eighty blocks every day for meals, the Russian Archbishop returned. He was willing to ordain Fan Noli as a priest on one condition: The Albanians of Boston should hold a meeting and give a satisfactory guarantee that they could support a priest. Father Jacob Grigorieff, pastor of the Russian Orthodox Church of Salem, Massachusetts, was
instructed by Archbishop Platon to attend this meeting and report to him.

A month later the meeting was held in Boston. Father Grigorieff, who attended it, made a favorable report. Consequently, Archbishop Platon decided to proceed with Fan Noli's ordination. Fan Noli went back to New York, but the Archbishop was again out of town. In his absence, on February 9, 1908, Fan Noli was ordained as Deacon by the Syrian Bishop Raphael Hawaweeny in St. Nicholas Church, 301 Pacific Street, Brooklyn, New York. On Sunday, March 8, 1908, at the age of twenty-six, Fan Noli was ordained as priest by Archbishop Platon at the Russian Cathedral of St. Nicholas, 15 East 97 Street, New York City. The ordination was attended by a delegation of Albanian friends consisting of Sotir Peshi, editor of "Kombi," Vangel Miller of Hudson, Massachusetts, Spiridon Ilo of Boston, and George Gushi of New York City.

After the ordination the young priest told Father Hotovitzky that he needed a Holy Communion set and some liturgical vestments. They both went to the basement of the Cathedral and Father Hotovitzky showed him some communion sets and various vestments. He invited him to select those he liked best. Fan Noli pointed out that he wanted the most inexpensive sets with easy monthly payments. Father Hotovitzky remarked that he should not worry about paying for the sets, as the communion set as well as the vestments were a gift from the Russian Church.

On March 22, 1908, Fan Noli celebrated his first Liturgy in the Knights of Honor Hall, Tremont Street, Boston, Massachusetts. That was the first Liturgy in Albanian in the history of the Orthodox Church. Fan Noli had translated the Liturgy himself from the Greek.

On that very afternoon the Albanians of Boston met in
Phoenix Hall, Tremont Street, Boston, Massachusetts, and organized the Albanian Orthodox Church of Saint George. Fan Noli was appointed its first pastor. His salary was fixed at $40.00 a month, which was fair for those days. Unfortunately, it could not be paid regularly until, after the First World War, because his congregation was very small and very poor. As a matter of fact, they were very generous because that salary was more than they could afford to pay.

HIGHER EDUCATION

After his ordination the first thing Fan Noli did was to continue his education. Ever since he had come to the United States in 1906 he had attended Evening High Schools to improve his English. After he was appointed as Pastor of St. George, he registered at Harvard University and four years later, in 1912, he received his degree of Bachelor of Arts, cum laude. Twenty-six years later, in 1938, he received his degree of Bachelor of Music from the New England Conservatory of Music. He majored in Composition. In 1945, seven years later, he received his Ph.D. degree from Boston University. He majored in the History of the Near East and Russia.

ECCLESIASTICAL CAREER

On March 24, 1918, Fan Noli was appointed administrator of the Albanian Orthodox Mission in America. On November 17, 1918 he took monastic vows and was elevated to the rank of Mitred Archimandrite by Bishop Alexander Nemolovsky in the Russian Cathedral of Saint Nicholas, 15 East 97 Street, New York City. On July 27, 1919, Fan Noli was appointed acting Bishop of the Albanian Orthodox Church in America. On November 21, 1923,
Above: CATHEDRAL OF ST. GEORGE, Korcha, ALBANIA

Right (top): Founders of VATRA, Boston, Massachusetts, 1912. Left to right: PASKAL ELEXI, KRISTO FLOKI, ILO TSOMARA, FAN NOLL, HARRY CHICOS, Y. DIMITRI, PAIK KONITZA.


Below: ANCIENT CHURCH at Poyuni, Albania
Fan Noli was consecrated as Bishop by Hierotheos Andon Yaho, Bishop of Miletoupolis, plenipotentiary Exarch of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and Christopher Kissi, Bishop of Syradon, later Archbishop of Albania, in the Cathedral of Saint George, Korcha, Albania. On the same day Fan Noli was appointed Metropolitan of Durazzo. Tirana, the capital of Albania, was under his jurisdiction. His official title was: Metropolitan of Durazzo, Gora, and Shpata, Primate and Exarch of All Illyria, the Western Sea, and of all Albania. In 1932, Fan Noli returned to the United States and resumed his duties as the Primate of the Albanian Orthodox Church in America.

ORGANIZATIONAL WORK

On January 6, 1907, one year before his ordination, Fan Noli founded the society “Bessa Bessen” (Loyalty) in Boston. Two years later, on February 15, 1909, this society started the publication of “Dielli,” (The Sun) which is still being published. On April 28, 1912, the Pan-Albanian Federation Vatra (The Hearth) was founded in the church hall at 227 Tremont Street, Boston. Fan Noli was one of its founders. The society “Bessa Bessen” was merged with this Federation. Its organ “Dielli” became the property of the Federation. This was the greatest Albanian organization ever founded abroad, and its Committee acted as a Government in Exile during the First World War, when Albania was occupied by foreign armies.

JOURNALISTIC WORK

Fan Noli edited the weekly newspaper “Dielli” in Albanian from February 15, 1909, the date of its foundation, until October 22, 1909; again from October 7, 1910
to July 7, 1911; and finally from December 21, 1915 to July 6, 1916, when "Dielli" had become a daily newspaper, altogether twenty-four months. In 1915 Fan Noli founded the monthly magazine, "The Adriatic Review," in English, an organ of the Federation Vatra. He edited this magazine for a year in 1915. He also founded "Republika" (The Republic), a weekly newspaper in Albanian and edited it in Boston from 1930-1933.

KONITZA AND NACHO

In 1909 Fan Noli met Faik Konitza when the latter came to Boston to assume the editorship of "Dielli" on October 22, 1909. As we have mentioned before, Fan Noli had tried unsuccessfully to get in touch with him from Athens in 1901. They became lifelong friends, and co-operated in the cause of Albania, although on several occasions they disagreed about certain policies. Fan Noli learned a good deal from Faik Konitza, who was a highly educated man and an expert on French literature. He was a good conversationalist and could talk intelligently on a variety of subjects.

As we have also mentioned before, Fan Noli had tried unsuccessfully to get in touch with Nicholas Nacho in 1897. He was one of the most energetic leaders of the Albanian Renaissance. Fan Noli met him for the first time fourteen years later, in 1911. In that year Fan Noli visited the Albanian communities of Odessa and Kishenev, Russia; Bucharest, Braila, and Constantza, Roumania; and Sofia, Bulgaria. He conducted services in Albanian in all these cities.

His visit in Bucharest was especially significant. The Primate of the Church of Roumania hesitated to give the Albanians a church for their services. It was Nicholas
Nacho who solved the problem. He went to the Russian envoy and asked for permission to use the chapel of the Legation. The envoy wrote him a letter telling him that the Albanians could use the chapel for as many services as they wanted, since Fan Noli was under the jurisdiction of the Russian Archbishop of New York. Nacho showed this letter to Tache Ionesco, the Roumanian Minister of Foreign Affairs, and told him that he could use the Russian Chapel for his services, but that he would prefer a Roumanian church. Otherwise the Albanians would interpret the incident as a refusal of the Roumanian Government and Church to grant them a place of worship in Roumania. Tache Ionesco, who was an old friend of Albania, secured a church on this occasion. Fan Noli used it for four consecutive services. After his departure, Archimandrite Haralamp Chalamani continued the Albanian services in the same church, which, by the way, is still used by the Albanian community of Bucharest.

Curiously enough, the funeral services of Nicholas Nacho were conducted by Fan Noli in that same church in 1913. It was on this occasion that Tache Ionesco, at the expense of the Roumanian government, published "Triodi," a church book that Fan Noli had translated into Albanian.

DELEGATE OF THE CHURCH

Albania, which had been a Turkish province since the end of the Fifteenth Century, was declared independent on November 28, 1912, after Turkey was defeated by the Balkan Allies. In spite of this declaration of independence, Albania was being blockaded by the Balkan Allies while they were negotiating peace with Turkey. The Albanian government sent to London a delegation headed by Mehmed Konitza, a brother of Faik Konitza, to appeal to the
British government to lift the blockade. Fan Noli was sent as a delegate by the Albanian Orthodox Church in America to help the official Albanian delegation. Faik Konitza was also sent to London for the same purpose by the Federation Vatra.

In March, 1913, an Albanian Congress, presided over by Faik Konitza, was held in Trieste, Austria, to protest against the blockade of Albania and to appeal to the Great Powers of Europe to lift it. Fan Noli was one of the speakers at this Congress. Shortly afterward the blockade was lifted. That gave Fan Noli an occasion to visit Valona, the seat of the provisional capital of Albania, and Durazzo, the capital of Albania during the short reign of Prince Wied in 1914.

PRESIDENT OF VATRA

The First World War, which broke out in August, 1914, found Fan Noli stranded in Vienna. It took him several months to get in touch with his friends in Boston. In 1915 he succeeded in returning to the United States. The Federation Vatra defrayed his traveling expenses. On July 18, 1915, he was elected President of Vatra for a term of one year. Again, on July 12, 1917, he was elected President of Vatra for a second term. This was the most important period in the history of the Federation.

As a delegate of Vatra, Fan Noli attended the Congress of Oppressed Nations held in Washington under the sponsorship of the United States government. The delegates of this Congress accompanied President Wilson to the tomb of George Washington in Mount Vernon where he delivered his famous speech about the Fourteen Points on July 4, 1918. This gave an opportunity to Fan Noli to meet President Wilson on the presidential yacht, the
“Mayflower,” and appeal to him to restore the independence of Albania, which was overrun by foreign armies during the First World War. President Wilson said: “I have one voice at the Peace Conference, and I will use that voice in favor of Albania.” He did use his influence to help Albania at the Peace Conference of Versailles. Moreover, in 1920 President Wilson denounced and prevented the partition of Albania, which had been agreed upon in the Secret Treaty of London in 1915. He made it clear that the American government was no party to that treaty and would never recognize its validity. This statement made President Wilson the most popular champion of Albanian independence.

During the First World War and for some time afterward, from 1914 to 1920, there was no Albanian government functioning in Albania on account of foreign occupation. During that period the executive committee of Vatra acted as a government in exile. It raised funds from the Albanians of America and maintained commissioners in various capitals of Europe and in the United States such as Mehmed Konitza in London, Dr. Michael Turtulli in Paris, and Constatine Chekrezi in Washington. These commissioners enjoyed semi-official recognition from the governments to which they were accredited.

DELEGATE TO THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

After the Armistice which ended the First World War was signed on November 11, 1918, most of the foreign armies of occupation evacuated Albania. But the Italians still stayed on along the southern seacoast of Albania, from Valona to the Greek frontier. On June 3, 1920, the Albanian government constituted at the Congress of Lushnia, sent an ultimatum to the Italian General Piacentini demanding
the immediate evacuation of Valona and Argirocastro. As the Italian general paid no attention to the ultimatum, the Albanians attacked the Italian army of occupation. The Italians were compelled to evacuate Argirocastro in a few days and Valona in August. They kept only the tiny Island of Sasseno, opposite Valona.

After the Italian evacuation, Fan Noli, accompanied by Archimandrite Vangel Chamche of Jamestown, New York, and Father Vasil Marko of St. Louis, Missouri, left the United States to offer their services to the Albanian government. Their traveling expenses were paid by the Federation Vatra. Archimandrite Vangel Chamche and Father Vasil Marko proceeded to Korcha, Albania. Fan Noli was sent by the Albanian government to Geneva as the head of a delegation to apply for the admission of Albania to the League of Nations. He was chosen for this diplomatic mission especially because he spoke fluently both French and English, which were the two official languages of the League of Nations.

His mission was successful. Albania was unanimously admitted to membership in the League of Nations on December 17, 1920. This triumph was largely due to the vigorous campaign of Lord Robert Cecil, Delegate of South Africa, who organized the movement to have Albania admitted to the League, and practically compelled all the opposing delegates either to vote in favor of the admission of Albania or to abstain from voting.

On that day Muhammed Ali, Delegate of India, made the following remark: "Albania deserves to be a member of the League of Nations because it is the only country in the world where Moslems, Roman Catholics, and Eastern Orthodox Christians cooperate fraternally in spite of their religious differences."
The admission of Albania to the League of Nations was of vital importance for these reasons: It re-affirmed the independence of Albania and invalidated the Secret Treaty of London. Moreover, it solved the problem of the Albanian frontiers. In 1913 an international commission composed of representatives of the then six Great Powers of Europe, was sent to Albania to delimit on the spot her frontiers, which had been previously delimited on the map by the Congress of Ambassadors in London. This commission finished its task in the South, and fixed the boundary on the spot from the Ionian Sea to the Lake of Ochrida. This is the frontier separating Albania and Greece.

But the work of the commission was interrupted by the First World War. Since the delegates represented states which had declared war against each other, any cooperation between their representatives was out of the question. That left the eastern and northern boundaries, which separated Albania from Yugoslavia, undefined. The Yugoslavs took advantage of the situation and moved into northeastern Albania as if it were their own territory. Their excuse was that they were violating no frontiers, because there were not any frontiers. One year after the admission of Albania to the League of Nations an international commission went to Albania and on the spot fixed the frontier separating Albania from Yugoslavia in 1921.

By the way, while the discussions about Albania were going on in the General Assembly of the League of Nations, the Greek delegate complained that it was useless for him to say anything, because the delegates were biased in favor of the Albanian delegate. Thereupon Lord Cecil remarked, “You Greek delegates should take lessons in speaking from the delegate of Albania.”

On that occasion the Manchester Guardian, June 23,
1924, wrote in an editorial: "Fan Noli is a man who would have been remarkable in any country. An accomplished diplomat, an expert in international politics, a skillful debater, from the outset he made a deep impression in Geneva. He knocked down his Balkan opponents in a masterly fashion, but always with a broad smile. He is a man of vast culture who has read everything worth reading in English and French."

Curiously enough, after this brilliant success, the greatest he had ever had in his diplomatic career, Fan Noli was stranded, as usual, in Geneva. The Albanian government did not send him money to pay his bills and his traveling expenses to Albania, because their treasury was empty. Again, the Federation Vatra came to his rescue and sent him the money he needed so badly.

**POLITICAL CAREER**

In 1921 the Albanian government invited the Federation Vatra, in recognition of its valuable services to the Mother Country, to send a representative to the Albanian Parliament. Fan Noli was their choice. He served for a term of two years, 1921 and 1922. He served for another term of two years, 1923 and 1924 as the Representative of the District of Korcha, Albania. Vatra defrayed the expenses of his electoral campaign.

In 1922 he was appointed Minister of Foreign Affairs in the Cabinet of Jaffer Ypi, but he resigned after a few months because he disagreed with the reactionary policies of the government.

A year later, as we have mentioned before, Fan Noli was consecrated as Bishop and appointed Metropolitan of Durazzo on November 21, 1923. After his consecration he was planning to retire from politics and devote all his time
to his Diocese. But subsequent events compelled him to change his plans.

DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN

On February 23, 1924, the newly elected members of the House of Parliament held a meeting, and started their work. The election of a speaker was the first item of their agenda. The candidate of the Conservative Party, or the landowners, headed by Premier Ahmed Zog, was Eshref Frasheri. The candidate of the Liberal Party, or the peasants, headed by Fan Noli, was Ibrahim Gindi. At 3 P.M., when Petro Poga, the temporary Speaker, called the meeting to order several revolver shots were heard outside the hall. Two bullets whizzed past Fan Noli’s nose and hit the desk of the Speaker. The latter, terror-stricken, left his desk and rushed into a loge, where he hid behind Archimandrite Vissarion Juvani, a former deputy.

A minute later Ahmed Zog entered the hall limping, with his left hand bleeding and a revolver in his right hand. He was accompanied by his own bodyguards and those of Shefket Verlatzi, a rich landowner and deputy of Elbasan, to whose daughter Ahmed Zog was engaged. They all had huge revolvers in their hands and looked threateningly at the deputies of the opposition, whom they suspected as the instigators of the assassination attempt. The deputies of the opposition did not budge from their seats. They were also armed, with the exception of Fan Noli. They simply drew their revolvers and prepared to defend themselves.

The elderly Akif Pasha of Elbasan was one of them. He was sitting next to Fan Noli and held an old-fashioned revolver in his trembling hand. He took aim at his old enemy of Elbasan, Shefket Verlatzi, who was surrounded
by his bodyguards. One of them was unusually sinister-looking. His upper lip was slashed and twisted out of shape, so that the upper lip could not touch the lower lip. With his protruding gold teeth, he looked like a hideous, snarling bulldog. Some of the frightened deputies took cover under their desks, and others were screaming hysterically.

Everybody thought that a massacre was impending. The bodyguards of Ahmed Zog and Shekret Verlatesi, reinforced by mercenaries who rushed into the hall, were waiting for a signal from their chiefs. Ahmed Zog signaled to them not to shoot. He did not want to start a free-for-all fight, which would have been as dangerous to him as to his opponents. He wanted first to get out of the hall safely, and then settle his accounts without harming his own supporters. Consequently, as soon as he could stand on his feet he left the hall accompanied by some of his bodyguards.

The would-be assassin was Bekir Walter. This is how he had tried to kill Ahmed Zog. He had taken a strategic position at the head of a staircase, and was waiting for Ahmed Zog. He pointed his revolver at Ahmed Zog's neck and would certainly have killed him point-blank if he had drawn the trigger immediately, without saying a word. But, according to an old Albanian custom, he did want to say a few words before shooting. He wanted to tell Ahmed Zog that he was killing him to get even with him for the murder of his uncle. The customary announcement he wanted to make was: “Remember me to my uncle.” But, as he was a stammerer, it took him quite a while to pronounce his farewell greeting. This short delay saved Zog. It gave him time to lift his hand to protect his head. So Ahmed Zog got away with slight scratches on his right hand, his shoulder, and his leg.

After firing the shots Bekir Walter rushed into the
nearest restroom and locked himself in. Captain Osman Gazepi, one of Zog’s men, with a detachment of soldiers, went to the restroom and asked Bekir Walter to surrender. The latter answered by shooting through the door at the soldiers and by singing patriotic songs. Captain Gazepi and his soldiers began shooting at the door, but the corridor was so narrow that they were unable to shoot straight at the door.

While this duel between Gazepi and Walter was going on, Ahmed Zog left the Parliament Hall and went to his home to lick his wounds and start a counter-attack. His plan became clear very shortly. He wanted to seize the capital, arrest the leading deputies of the opposition, proclaim martial law, and establish his dictatorship. So he ordered Osman Gazepi to compel the deputies of the opposition to surrender to him. The deputies of the opposition refused to surrender. Then Osman Gazepi besieged the Parliament Building to starve them out.

Another military detachment under Muharem Bayraktari and Fikri Dema was stationed at a strategic point near the principal mosque of Tirana. But Ahmed Zog did not feel strong enough to take immediate action, and had to wait for several hours until he could get reinforcements from the regions of Dibra and his native Mati.

While Ahmed Zog was waiting for his reinforcemnts, the situation turned in favor of the deputies of the opposition. The military commander of Tirana, Major Gelal Preveza, and the commander of the gendarmerie, Major Shefket Korcha, refused to take orders from Ahmed Zog. On the contrary, they ordered their detachments to chase away Osman Gazepi and raise the siege of the Parliament. Captain Aziz Chami, assisted by Captain Riza Cerrova, First Lieutenant Luigi Mikeli, and Second Lieu-
tenant Asslan Peya, was ordered by his commander to drive from the Parliament Building all the soldiers and mercenaries who had no right to be there. Moreover, he notified the deputies that the army and the gendarmerie were there to protect them and that they were free to continue their discussions or adjourn and go home at their pleasure.

Captain Selim Libohova, assisted by Lieutenant Hamza Vlora, was sent by Shefket Korcha to Ahmed Zog’s residence to guard his home and prevent him from sending any of his armed mercenaries against the Parliament Building. First Lieutenant Dede Nikolla, of Gruda, assisted by Second Lieutenant Anesti Kesari, from Himara, disarmed Muharem Bayraktari and Fikri Dema and drove them away from the principal mosque of Tirana, where they had been stationed by Ahmed Zog.

A battalion of soldiers was sent to the bridge of Tuyani and stopped 2,000 mercenaries who were coming from Mati to help Ahmed Zog. Another battalion of soldiers stopped another band of 2,000 mercenaries who were coming from Dibra for the same purpose. Moreover, Major Shefket Korcha seized the telegraph and telephone offices and censored messages in order to prevent reinforcements coming to Zog from Elbasan and other regions.

First Lieutenant Aleks Pullumbi from Shkodra deserves special mention. He was present at the assembly during the assassination attempt and rushed to the commanders of the army and the gendarmerie and gave the alarm. Moreover, he took an active part in stopping Ahmed Zog and his mercenaries.

Captain Osman Gazepi and the mercenaries of Ahmed Zog and Shefket Verlatzi threw up the sponge when they found that the whole army and the gendarmerie, including all their officers, were against them.
The would-be assassin, after singing another patriotic song, declared that he was ready to surrender to a parliamen-
tary committee composed of members of both parties. So he surrendered to a committee consisting of Deputy
Selaheddiin Bloshti of the Conservative Party and Deputy
Kiaziim Kotzuli of the Liberal Party. Walter declared that
he had attempted to assassinate Zog in order to save Albania
from a traitor, and that he had no accomplices. His only
regret was that he had missed Zog. He was sent to prison
to await his trial.

After taking care of Bekir Walter, the Parliament pro-
ceeded to the election of a Speaker. The successful candi-
date was Eshrief Frashesti of the Conservative Party. He
got 58 votes. The candidate of the Liberal Party, Ibrahim
Gindi, got 33 votes. The Conservatives had the majority
in the Parliament because they were in power and manipu-
lated the elections. After all, that was the usual thing in
all the Balkan countries in those days. By the way, prime
minister Ion Bratiani of Rumania gave a classical solution
to the electoral problem when he said to King Ferdinand I:
"Your Majesty, give me the government, and I will give
you the majority." After the election of the Speaker, the
assembly adjourned and everyone went home to get a
much-needed rest.

A strange incident took place during the general
commotion of the day. Seid Vrioni, a deputy of the
Conservative Party, was in a nearby restroom when Bekir
Walter fired his shots at Zog. Captain Gazepi and his
soldiers thought that there were two assassins to capture,
one in each restroom. So they fired at both restrooms with
equal fury. Poor Seid Vrioni was screaming that he had
nothing to do with the assassination attempt, but no one
paid any attention to his protests. After Bekir Walter's
surrender they pulled him out of the restroom unharmed, but half dead from fright.

During the harrowing siege of the Parliament, which lasted about four hours, Fan Noli for once in his life, did not ask himself the questions: "What would Napoleon, or Scanderbeg, or Jesus do in such a case?" He knew the answer was given by the Old Testament in the episode of Daniel in the den of lions.

**PREMIER OF ALBANIA**

On April 20, 1924 Avni Rustem, a deputy of the opposition, was murdered by a hired assassin in broad daylight in Tirana. As Avni Rustem was very popular, his murder started a revolution against Ahmed Zog's regime.

Fan Noli was asked by his friends to join the rebels. The rebels represented the peasants of Albania, who had risen against their feudal landowners. It was certainly a people's war against their tyrants. Again, Fan Noli argued the case as he had been taught by his father and his uncle back in Ibrik-Tepe:

What would Napoleon do in this case? Of course, he would join the people against the feudal landowners. No doubt about it. After all, that was what he had done in all his campaigns, knocking down kings and barons.

What would Scanderbeg do in this case? Of course, he would join the people against their tyrants. After all, that was what he had done all his life until the deadly fever prevented him from jumping on his horse.

What would Jesus do? Of course, he would not fight. He was not a general. But he would certainly take the side of the poor and oppressed, as he had always done. He would help the people and liberate them through weapons
that he considered mightier than the sword, through love, service, and sacrifice.

Again the vote was unanimous. So Fan Noli joined the rebels and led them to victory. On June 10, 1924 the rebels seized Tirana, the capital, and compelled Zog to flee to Yugoslavia.

After this revolution Fan Noli was appointed Premier on June 17, 1924, and later on Acting Regent of Albania for a few months. His Cabinet consisted of the following Ministers: Fan Noli, Prime Minister; Suleiman Delvina, Minister for Foreign Affairs; Regep Shala, Minister of the Interior; Luis Gurakuqi, Minister of Finance; Kassem Kiaezezi, Minister of Defense; Stavro Viniah, Minister of Justice and Minister of Education; Kiazim Kotzuli, Minister of Public Works.

Fan Noli stayed in power until December 24, 1924. During his regime he introduced agrarian reforms in Albania, which until then had been ruled and owned by a few landowners. It was only natural for a Harvard graduate to introduce democracy into his native country. On December 25th, Ahmed Zog returned at the head of a mercenary army of White Russians organized and equipped by Yugoslavia.

It was a case of purely foreign intervention. The restoration of Ahmed Zog was favored by all the neighbors of feudal landlords who were exploiting the country for their own benefit. They hoped that Ahmed Zog, the leader of the landowners, would help them to carry out their schemes of partitioning Albania among themselves. As a matter of fact, Ahmed Zog did make certain rectifications of the frontier in favor of Yugoslavia and granted certain con-

Albania: Italy, Yugoslavia, and Greece wanted to destroy Albania by imposing on the people a regime of
cessions to the Greek minority in Southern Albania. He also made such far-reaching military, bank, and oil concessions to Italy that Albania became practically a vassal of Italy.

Was Fan Noli's revolution in vain? Not at all. It proved that the people of Albania did not want the feudal landowners. It proved that the landowners could not return without foreign intervention. It proved that the landowners were down and out. After all, they never recovered from that blow. So the revolution of 1924 was a turning point in the history of Albania. It was epoch making.

AMERICANIZATION OF THE CHURCH

Fan Noli left Albania on Christmas Day, 1924. He was stranded in Germany for eight years while he was trying to get an American visa. Finally he got it and returned to the United States in 1932. He retired from politics and resumed his duties as the head of the Albanian Orthodox Church in America.

The problem which confronted him now was the younger generation. These young people were completely Americanized and could not understand the religious services, which were conducted in Albanian. Fan Noli tried to solve that problem and is still working on it. Just as he had translated the most important Church Books from Greek into Albanian fifty years ago, now, once more, he had to translate them from Greek into English.

He has published eight Church Books in English, which will be described later on. He and the clergymen under his jurisdiction preach and conduct services both in English and Albanian. They are trying their best to promote an American Orthodox Church which will unite all the Orthodox groups in the United States into one single
organization. Moreover, the last Convention of the Church passed a resolution urging the Churches to finance the publication of a magazine with the following purposes: (1) To save the younger generation for the Orthodox Church; (2) to keep in touch with the Churches of the Diocese; (3) to promote the organization of an American Orthodox Patriarchate.

VATRA'S GENEROSITY AND SUPPORT

In 1946 the Albanian Federation Vatra gave Fan Noli a gift of $5,500.00 on the occasion of his 40th Anniversary in the United States. Fan Noli used this amount to publish his "Album," and "Beethoven and the French Revolution." In 1953 the Vatra started a drive and raised about $20,000.00, which they gave Fan Noli to buy himself a home. He used this money to buy a house in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. The house is surrounded by a beautiful lawn studded with many kinds of trees — orange, lemon, lime, cumquat, Brazil pepper and palm. The whole yard is surrounded by a multi-colored hibiscus hedge. Moreover, Fan Noli has bought two more lots on his right and is planning to buy more on his left. His idea is to enlarge the lawn and make an orchard of tropical trees six times larger than the original area he bought.

The back yard is so favorably situated and so well protected that one can get a sun bath every day the sun shines, no matter how cold or windy the weather may be. Fan Noli spends from two to three months there every year. Every winter he looks forward to the pleasure of a Florida vacation and always returns with a good tan and with renewed energy to resume his work. On several occasions Fan Noli has expressed in glowing terms his appreciation of Vatra's generous gifts. As a matter of fact, some of the
most brilliant successes of Fan Noli's career are due in a large measure to Vatra.

GREEK COMMENT

The "Great Greek Encyclopedia" (Megali Elliniki Enkiklopedia), Volume XXIII, pp. 818-820, Athens, 1933 published a long article on Fan Noli signed by Professor K. I. Soulis of the Gymnasium of Janina. After describing his literary work, Professor Soulis makes the following comment: "Fan Noli is one of the foremost Albanian men of letters." At the end of his article he concludes: "Fan Noli is one of the most dynamic political personalities of Albania... The annexation of Northern Epirus by Albania is the result of his political maneuvers. Owing to his culture, his knowledge of languages, and his journalistic ability, he has been the guiding and inspiring master mind of the Albanian Renaissance and its principal champion abroad." This comment is significant, coming as it does from a prejudiced Greek writer.

BOOKS BY METROPOLITAN FAN NOLI

RELIGIOUS BOOKS IN ALBANIAN

1. Sherbesat e Javes se Madhe (Services of Holy Week), 103 pp., Boston, 1908, published by the Albanian Orthodox Church in America, contains Anthems and Lessons of Holy Week and Easter.

2. Libra e Sherbesave te Shenta (Service Book), 246 pp., Brussells, 1909, published by the Albanian Orthodox Church in America (A.O.C.A.), contains the principal services of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

4. Triodi i Vogel (Small Triodi), 270 pp., Bucharest, 1913, published by the Roumanian government, contains Anthems and Lessons of Easter Lent and Easter.


RELIGIOUS BOOKS IN ENGLISH


and Answers dealing with the Creed, the Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Beatitudes; also a rhythmic translation of the Epitaphy Lamentations and the Salutations of Saint Mary from the Acathist Hymn.


RELIGIOUS BOOKS IN ALBANIAN AND ENGLISH


HISTORICAL BOOKS IN GREEK

17. *Albania*, by Sami Frashe, translated into Greek by Fan Noli, Cairo, 1906, published by Thanas Tashko and John Vruho, deals with the past, present, and future of Albania.
HISTORICAL BOOKS IN ALBANIAN


HISTORICAL BOOKS IN ENGLISH


LITERARY BOOKS IN ALBANIAN

24. *Israilite dhe Filistine* (Israelites and Philistines), 48 pp., Boston, 1907, a dramatic sketch in three acts.


30. An Enemy of the People, by Henrik Ibsen, 124 pp., Brussels, 1926, an Albanian version with a critical analysis by Fan Noli.


32. The Cabin (La Barraca), by Blasco Ibanez, 144 pp., Boston, 1921, published by the Albanian Federation Vatra, an Albanian version by Fan Noli.

33. Don Quixote, by Miguel Cervantes de Saavedra, First Part, in five volumes, pp. 544, Boston, 1932-1933, an Albanian version with a critical analysis by Fan Noli.


36. *Albumi*, 110 pp., Boston, 1948, published by the Federation Vatra, original poems and rhythmical Albanian versions of Longfellow's Scanderbeg; Edgar Allan Poe's Raven, and Annabelle Lee; and other rhythmical versions by Fan Noli; with a critical analysis by Mitrush Kuteli.

37. *Ligjeron Fan Noli* (Fan Noli Speaks), by Lefter L. Dilo, 92 pp., Tirana, Albania, 1944, contains excerpts from speeches of Fan Noli.

**MUSICAL BOOKS IN ALBANIAN**

38. *Hymnare* (Hymnal), 134 pp., Boston, 1936, published by A.O.C.A., a compilation of liturgical music, mostly Russian, for mixed choir.

**MUSICAL BOOKS IN ENGLISH**


**DIELLI FEUILLETONS**

41. The following works have been translated into Albanian by Fan Noli and were published in installments in the newspaper "Dielli": *The Abbess of Castro* and *Vanina Vanini*, by Stendhal; *Le Mariage Force* by Moliere; and *The Alhambra*, by Washington Irving.

**MUSICAL COMPOSITIONS**

(unpublished)

42. a) *Scanderbeg*, a tone poem for orchestra; b) a *Byzantine Overture* for orchestra; c) *Le Pauvre Gaspard* by Paul Verlaine, a song for tenor and orchestra; d) *Psalm 137, By the Rivers of Babylon*, four-part a capella song for mixed choir; etc.
COMMENTS ON

“BEETHOVEN AND THE FRENCH REVOLUTION”

GEORGE BERNARD SHAW: “It is the work of a first rate critic and biographer. I read it through from end to end with the utmost satisfaction, being myself a connoisseur as musician, critic, and artist-philosopher by profession.”

JEAN SIBELIUS: “I have read the book with much interest. I thought I knew all about Beethoven, but in your book there is much that was new to me.”

ERNEST NEWMAN, biographer of Wagner, in the Sunday Times of London, England, March 26, 1950: “The cross-fertilization of two ancient cultures, the Albanian and the American, has produced gratifying results, especially in the matter of English style . . . Walter Pater could hardly have expressed it better.”

THOMAS MANN; German novelist: “I have read your book with interest and fascination. It is a real contribution to the Beethoven literature.”

WARREN STORY SMITH, Professor of Music, New England Conservatory, in the Boston Sunday Post, May 9, 1948: “We were long ago reconciled to the fact that as a man Wagner was something less than admirable. If we are to believe Fan Noli’s well-documented analysis of Beethoven’s personality, he was the less respectable of the two. . . . Fan Noli’s concern is only incidentally with Beethoven’s character. He has set out to prove his republican sympathies, questioned by Vincent d’Indy, and has done so quite conclusively.”

J. DUANE SQUIRES, chairman of the Department of Social Studies, Colby College: “Since my professional field of study is modern history, I enjoyed your monograph
very much. You certainly did an excellent job, and all students of the French Revolution are your debtors.”

PROFESSOR KENNETH CONANT, Harvard University: “I have just read your most interesting book. I was fascinated by your presentation of a very difficult matter, and much pleased with the way in which you made a living, vigorous, suffering man emerge from the dry texts and the embalmed biographies. It was characteristically kind of you to end with Göttern schadet nichts” (Nothing can harm the gods) in fine big capital letters. It was pleasant to savor your wit, and to see your eyes twinkle (in imagination) as I read some of the jolly passages.”

PROFESSOR ROBERT MOODY, Boston University: “I have read every word of your book and found it not only convincing but enjoyable. Congratulations on an excellent production.”

PROFESSOR GENEVA DRINKWATER, Vassar College: “I am tremendously impressed by the great volume of research which I know preceded the writing of this slender volume. People who haven’t tried it probably can’t realize what labor is involved in research. You have performed a very great service in wading through volumes and volumes of German and trying to rescue Beethoven from the good intentions of his admirers, as well as from the villainy of his enemies.”

PROFESSOR GEORGE MADSEN, Boston University: “I should like to add my compliments to the scores you must have received on a scholarly, beautifully worded treatment of Beethoven’s life.”

FLOYD DEAN, Professor of Music, Boston University: “I enjoyed to the utmost the pungency of your idiomatic vernacular so characteristic of your spoken words adding spice to the topics of conversation. . . . Your avid
search through exhaustive sources is most commendable."

NORINE ROBARDS, Instructor, New England Conservatory: "What a prodigious amount of research you did on the book, and what fun the doing must have been, and how interestingly it is written."

WALTER PISTON, Professor of Music, Harvard University: "Your book makes most interesting reading and raises some rather unusual points about Beethoven's ideological influences. I consider it a valuable addition to my library."

PROFESSOR ALEXANDER VASILIEV, University of Wisconsin: "Thank you very much for sending me your fascinating book. For a man like myself who is deeply interested in music and its history such contributions as yours have a special value."

PROFESSOR CHARLES HUSE, Boston University: "I have read your book with much interest. It is an excellent piece of work. You have made a happy choice of a subject which combines history and music."

PROFESSOR CAMILLO MERLINO, Boston University: "Your deep and sustained interest in scholarship has always marked your activity and personality. You are to be warmly congratulated on this added achievement."

PROFESSOR KENNETH SETTON, University of Pennsylvania: "Fascinating."

PROFESSOR ALFRED MEYER, Dean of the College of Music, Boston University: "A real contribution to the Beethoven literature."

PROFESSOR S. M. WAXMAN, Boston University: "A very thorough painstaking piece of work."

PROFESSOR FRANK NOWAK, Chairman of the Department of History, Boston University: "It is con-
vincing and fascinating. You have done an excellent job in a very judicious manner. More power to you!"

MRS. CAROLINE URIE, Quaker, author, and poet: "I have read with absorbed interest your monograph on the revolutionary Beethoven. It is a revealing special slant on the great genius which adds significance to much of his music and which completely escapes the ordinary music-lover. This book does much to interpret for me the last movement of the Ninth Symphony which, for all its magnificence, has always disturbed me as expressing a different sort of excitement than could be described as Joy. One has to be reminded that genius doesn't function in a vacuum, and the material from which works of art are created will be colored and modified by the events and the thinking of the contemporary environment. I suppose, also, we need to be constantly reminded of the feet of clay of all our idols — to realize that genius is not essentially different from gross and common human nature — human nature sublimated and intensified. Understanding rather than hero-worship is what we need for a proper appreciation of creative greatness. The coarse, the vulgar, the Gargantuan attributes of a genius like Beethoven, call for understanding, not hero-worship. Your little book is a help toward such understanding. Thank you for it!"

GEORGE LA PIANA, Professor of Church History, Harvard University: "Many, many thanks for the copy of your recent book, Beethoven and the French Revolution, which you so kindly sent me. I started reading it as soon as it came into my hands and I was so fascinated by your able, well-documented, and convincing reconstruction of Beethoven the man, that I went on reading till I reached the last page. There is no more delicate operation than that of clearing away the incrustations that usually grow
so thick on the memory of great personalities, giving rise to myths. You performed this operation with the skill of a master. Congratulations!"

ROBERT LEE WOLFE, Professor of Byzantine History, University of Wisconsin: "I am most impressed by your book. It is altogether convincing, thoroughly documented, and most entertainingly written, a successful combination of scholarship and literature."

PROFESSOR WARREN O. AULT, former Chairman of the Department of History, Boston University: I was delighted to receive your book, which I read from beginning to end. I enjoyed it a great deal both from the standpoint of its scholarly and its literary qualities."

DOCTOR EDWARD K. SAWYER: "Your book is not only the best but the most impartial and correct on the life of Beethoven of any I have ever read."

DOCTOR HARRY MESSENGER, Librarian, Harvard University: "I gave up Labor Day to the uninterrupted enjoyment of your every word. I was as absorbed in reading your book as you were in writing it. I was fascinated by the French wit and by the crystals of Attic salt scintillating on every page."

MAX MAYNARD, Professor of English, University of New Hampshire: "I received your excellent book on Beethoven a week ago and have read it through, some parts of it two or three times. One thing that has impressed me particularly is the ease and vigor of your writing. I had not expected quite the degree of skill you display with the English language. Your style is graceful, forceful, colloquial; and exact, all at the same time — a rare combination. And when I remind myself that English isn't your native tongue, I am thoroughly amazed."

KARL GEIRINGER, Professor of Music, Boston
University: “I greatly appreciate your generosity in sending me a copy of your fascinating Beethoven book. I am reading this very beautifully written book with the greatest interest and am frequently telling my students about its content. I feel that we need works of this type and wish to congratulate you on this great achievement.”

PROFESSOR CLYDE KLUCKHOHN, Harvard University: “I find your book another proof of your extraordinary versatility and profundity.”

PROFESSOR CARL MC KINLEY, New England Conservatory: “It was most refreshing to read your book with your terse and lucid style which cuts clearly through the fog of nonsense with which all such subjects are usually surrounded. While I did not think there was much doubt about Beethoven’s sympathy with the ideas of Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity, it is gratifying to have all this material so purposefully assembled.”

HARPER’S MAGAZINE, March, 1948: “Fan Noli has done meritorious work in discarding the conventional generalities and in discussing with the aid of Beethoven’s own words every question from program music to liberty, equality, and fraternity.”

CLEVELAND NEWS, December 31, 1947: “While the book remains true to its title it is much more than that implies, for it is actually a fresh and unprejudiced view of the composer based on all available documents.

JULIETTE LAINÉ, Los Angeles News, October 25, 1947: “If you are looking for a good work on Beethoven, something that will tell you all you want to know about this extraordinary man, briefly and concisely, this is it. Most of the works dealing with this master composer, particularly those of his European biographers, are ponderous and heavy going, even for the enthusiast. Moreover,
many concern themselves primarily with his music rather than with the man. Fan Noli swings to the opposite extreme — thanks be — and his book devotes little space to the music per se, and gives us instead a highly illuminating portrait of the man. . . . Every admirer of Beethoven should read this book, not merely because it is the first time that a biographer has dealt so clearly with his political sympathies, but because the author has fearlessly eliminated all the hoary legends and has probed for his facts at their sources. What emerges in fast-moving summary is vastly more colorful and interesting than any of the whitewashed fairy-tales which other biographers have given us.”

HERBERT F. PEYSER, in Musical America, December 1, 1949: “Fan Noli presents us with a portrait of Beethoven which reminds one of the sort of picture Cromwell asked to have painted of himself, with never a wart or blemish modified or eliminated. The whole monograph is a priceless piece of debunking. And the most amazing part of it is that the author at no time fails to support even his extremest statements. Everything is documented to the hilt. One really marvels how this book escaped being written before. Possibly it is better so, for there are relatively few musicologists and historians who write with as much sparkle and dry humor as this worthy cleric. . . . The short sharp chapter entitled “Beethoven the Man” is in some ways the most valuable part of the work for the astonishingly colorful and devastatingly human delineation of the composer it furnishes — an idol with feet of clay, if ever there was one. . . . One word to the wise: Here is a book no student or ‘Beethovenolater’ should dream of missing.”
MISCELLANEOUS COMMENTS

FAIK KONITZA: “Fan Noli has given us the best history of Scanderbeg, our national hero. . . . The use of the Albanian language in the Liturgy is one of his greatest achievements. The day on which he conducted his first Albanian Liturgy is a turning point in the history of the Albanian Renaissance. We cannot forget it and we cannot let others forget it.”

LEFTER DILÒ: “Fan Noli is an outstanding standard-bearer of the Albanian Renaissance. . . . He is our greatest orator.”

MITRUSH KUTELLI: “Fan Noli is a master builder of the Albanian literary language. His style is epigrammatic, forceful, virile, lyric and epic at the same time. He personifies the heroic spirit of our race.”

VEHBI BALA: “Fan Noli is a dynamic poet, an outstanding orator and man of letters, a talented translator, one of the best stylists of our Albanian prose, and a foremost pioneer of our Renaissance. He has exercised a deep influence in the history of our culture.”

F. S. PETROV, In Balkan Countries, 1946, 482 pp.: “Fan Noli, author of superb poems and translator of Shakespeare, occupies a high place in Albanian literature.”

DIMITRI TREBICKA, in “Liria,” May 16, 1958: “Fan Noli is really a great man.”

VERY REV. STEPHEN UPSON, PH.D.: “Your half-century of achievement has been great indeed, and the record thereof will not only be found in history books, but in the annals of the Orthodox Church in America, to say nothing of its people. You brought the Church from Greek into Albanian, and have now given it a mighty
IMPETUS TO CARRY ON IN ENGLISH; THIS IS WORK ENOUGH FOR ONE LIFETIME!"

PROFESSOR K. FRASHERI, University of Tirana, *George Kastrioti Scanderbeg*, 1958, p. 15: "One of the most objective and most critical studies about Scanderbeg is the work of the Albanian historian Fan S. Noli, published in New York in 1947, in English."

DR. NORBERT JOKL, former Professor of Philology, University of Vienna: "Fan Noli's translation of Omar Khayyam's Rubaiyat is better than the best translation in any European language, with the possible exception of that of Edward Fitzgerald."

DR. A. RAPPAPORT, Austrian diplomat and Oriental scholar: "I doubt whether the quatrains of Omar Khayyam in Persian are better than those of Fan Noli in Albanian."

SOTIR PETSI, in "Kombi", March 10, 1908: "Fan Noli is a great Apostle sent to Albania by Christ... He flashed on our sky as a dazzling meteor."

MILTO SOTIR-GURRA, in "Bashkimi i Kombit", March 10, 1944: "Volumes would be needed to describe the work of this Titan of the Albanian Renaissance."

WRITERS' CLUB, Tirana, Albania: "Your works, which enjoy a great popularity in Albania, are a treasure house of Albanian literature and culture."

GERIM PANARITY, Editor, "Dielli," September 1, 1948: "Fan Noli's life is a triumphal procession. His work in every field, patriotic, religious, political, and literary, is an immortal monument."
TRANSLATION FROM ALBANIAN:

THE AUTOCEPHALOUS ORTHODOX CHURCH OF ALBANIA:

PRESIDENT
OF THE HOLY SYNOD.

TIRANA, FEB. 2, 1929.

No. 89.

CERTIFICATE

Hereby it is verified that His Grace Teoctist (Fan Noli) was canonically consecrated to the rank of bishop by himself and by His Grace the Hon. Bishop of Kukesi Tereza, at Kukesi, on St. Mary's Day, the 8th day of November of the Julian calendar (the 4th of December of the Gregorian calendar) in the year 1929, in St. George's Church at the sacred city, on the same day in which his name is inscribed with the title of Metropolitan of Durazzo.

TIRANA, FEBRUARY 2, 1929.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE AUTOCEPHALOUS ORTHODOX CHURCH
ARCHBISHOP OF ALL ALBANIA
METROPOLITAN OF DURAZZO AND TIRANA

(Seal and Signature)  

No. 89.

MINISTRY OF JUSTICE.

Reg. No. 116 for the substitution of the signature of Kukesi Tereza, President of the Autocephalous Orthodox Church of Albania, Archbishop of All Albania, and of the official seal.

TIRANA, FEBRUARY 2, 1929.

(Signed seal)  

BY ORDER OF THE MINISTER
FOR EXTRAMURAL GENERAL

(T. N. MERO)

No. 96.

Received and certified by

TIRANA, FEBRUARY 2, 1929.

(Signed seal)  

BY ORDER OF THE MINISTER
FOR EXTRAMURAL GENERAL

(T. N. MERO)

J. Lanfranq, solely swear that I know the English and Albanian languages and that the foregoing translated and true transcript is a true and literal transcript of the original instrument into the English language.

[Signature]

TIRANA, FEBRUARY 2, 1929.

FAN NOLI'S DOCUMENT OF CONSECRATION in Albanian and English.
CERTIFICATE

We, the undersigned, hereby declare in the presence of Bishop Athanasius of Durres, that we have witnessed the consecration of Father Noll as Bishop of Tirana and the Metropolitan of the Diocese of Albania on the 25th day of February, 1969. The Bishop was installed in the Cathedral of the Holy Trinity on the same day.

[Signatures]

Michael Noll

Albanian American

Tirana, 25 February 1969

[Seal]

Michael Noll

Consul of the United States of America

Fan Noll's DOCUMENT OF CONSECRATION in Albanian and English.
THE CHURCHES OF THE DIOCESE

The backbone of every organization is the people in it. Of course, in a church the clergymen come first. Their work, in our case, has been especially hard. They have had to organize congregations with nothing to start on. Their salaries at the beginning were nominal, irregular, and, as a rule, inadequate. They were practically factotums of the parish. Beside their regular work in the church they had to help their parishioners as translators, clerks, guides, advisors, and errand boys. They had to solicit money for every drive of the parish. In short, they had to do many chores no other congregation expects their clergyman to do. It is extremely hard to find adequate words to describe their heavy sacrifices.

All the Churches of the Diocese have been built or bought with generous voluntary contributions. The task of raising the necessary funds in large communities was always strenuous, but not impossible. In small communities, it was back-breaking. It was indeed a miracle that it was done at all.

All the books published by the Diocese in Albanian and in English have been financed by voluntary contributions from all the Albanian Churches and communities all over the United States. Although their Diocese is one of the smallest Orthodox groups in the United States, still it is second to none in respect to the quality and quantity of the books published and the amount of money spent in publishing them.

Practically all the Churches have choirs which can sing the liturgical responses both in English and Albanian. The
THE CHURCHES OF THE DIOCESE

ST. GEORGE CATHEDRAL, Boston, Mass.
members of these choirs volunteer their services, and contribute to the beauty of the ceremonies.

Practically all the Churches have auxiliary societies of ladies who tirelessly organize parties and bazaars to raise money which they donate to their Church. They are always ready to volunteer their services to the Church whenever they are needed.

Last but not least come the members and contributors, who always donate generously to the Church.

To all these,—priests, choir-singers, ladies of the auxiliary societies, members and contributors, we express our heartfelt appreciation for creating a Church for their people, an epoch making achievement.

ST. GEORGE CATHEDRAL, BOSTON, MASS.

On March 22, 1908, in Phoenix Hall, Tremont Street, Boston, a meeting was held in which the Church of St. George was organized. The members of the first Church Committee were the following: Nicholas Christopher, Treasurer; Toli George, Secretary; Vasil Philip, Assistant Secretary; Misto Millona, Harry V. Kachka, Kozma John, and Kosta Ratska.

On that same day the following Trustees were appointed for neighboring communities: Christo Kirka, Joseph Pani, Pando Serani, and Andrea Christo, for Natick, Massachusetts; Andrea Dishnitz, Irakli Theodore, and Andrew Miller, for Huison, Massachusetts; Peter Kosta, Nicholas Rodhe, Andrew Kreshpani, and Vangel Zguro, for Marlboro, Massachusetts; Ilo Anastas, Christo Koki, and Dimitri Simon for Worcester, Massachusetts; Sotir Lezi for Manchester, New Hampshire.

Services were held in various halls from 1908 until 1910.
THE CHURCHES OF THE DIOCESE

For about eleven years, from 1911 to 1921, a hall on the top floor of the building at 227 Tremont Street was used for regular services. In 1922 a Swedish Church situated at 20 Emerald Street, Boston, was bought and used for services until 1948. In 1949 the present building, formerly a Unitarian Church, situated at 523 East Broadway, South Boston, Massachusetts, was bought and is now used as a Cathedral and the headquarters of the Albanian Orthodox Church in America.

The following men have served as priests: Rev. Fan Noli, now Metropolitan, Rev. Naum Cere, Rev. Damian Angeli, Rev. Stathi Melani, Rev. Nicholas Christopher, Rev. Dhosi Katundi, Rev. Vangel Chamche, later Bishop Agathangel, Rev. Vani Chani, Archimandrite Thimi Theodos, and Rev. Stephen Lasko. The Very Rev. C. E. Ellis is the present Dean of the Cathedral.

Archimandrite Thimi Theodos was especially active in raising the money with which the Cathedral was bought and remodelled. Today the Cathedral is easily the most beautiful Orthodox Church in Boston. It is a great monument to all those whose generosity have made its acquisition possible.

In November, 1955 the Diocese acquired a building at 529 East Broadway, South Boston, which is used for Sunday School classes. The building contains convenient accommodations for ten children’s classes.

The choir of the Cathedral was organized in 1916 by Professor Thomas Nassi, a graduate of the New England Conservatory. He was its first conductor. It was reorganized in 1934 by the late Father Grigorieff, Mitred Archpriest of the Russian Orthodox Church.

“The Daughters of St. George” is the auxiliary society of the ladies of the Cathedral. It was founded in 1935.
COMMITTEE OF THE DAUGHTERS OF ST. GEORGE. Seated, left to right: Kelsavage Naum, Vice-Chairman, Athina T. Costa, Patereska C. E. Ellis, Helen Tassellary, Chairman. Standing: Mary Lench, Persephone Margarit, Louise Ananatos, Ethel Hodges, Secretary.
They have raised thousands of dollars for the remodelling and embellishment of St. George Cathedral.

The Sunday School was organized in 1923, and now has about one hundred and fifty pupils.

The following parishioners have served as Chairman of the Church Committee: Toli Tseko, 1921-1922; Nissi Ikonom, 1922-1924; Elias Mitchell, 1924-1926; Tiko Tseko, 1926-1927; Nani Theodore, 1927-1928; Elias Mitchell, 1928-1931; Dhima Peterson, 1931-1933; Goni Peterson, 1933-1934; Dhamo Orgocka, 1934-1935; Theodore Kotto, 1935-1936; Dhima Peterson, 1936-1939; Elias Mitchell, 1939-1941; Lambi Misho, 1941-1942; Dhima Peterson, 1942-1943; Leo Sexeny, 1943-1946; Harry Chicos, 1946-1947; Gary Riska, 1947-1949.

CHURCH OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

The Church of St. John the Divine is located at 31-33 North Russell Street, Boston 14, Massachusetts. It was founded in 1933 by the present Pastor, Rev. Fr. Alexander T. M. Haluschynsky. The congregation is made up largely of displaced Ukrainians and other Orthodox communicants of the neighborhood, Serbian, Bulgarian, Estonian, and Latvian. The services are conducted in Old Slavonic.

CHURCH OF ST. MARY'S ANNUNCIATION
NATICK, MASSACHUSETTS

The Church was organized in 1919 with the Rev. Vangel Chamche, later Bishop Agathangel, as pastor. Regular services were held for six months in Knights of Pythias Hall and in Summer Street. Services were suspended in 1920, but resumed again in 1927.
THE CHURCHES OF THE DIOCESE

CHURCH OF ST. MARY'S ANNUNCIATION, N I B U S, MASS.
In 1938 the present church building at the corner of Washington Street and North Avenue was purchased. It was dedicated on October 16, 1955. The following clergymen have served as pastors: Rev. Vangel Chamche, 1919; Rev. Lazar Kozma, 1927-1933; Rev. Peter Chala, 1933-1936; Rev. Michael Terrova, 1939-1948; Archimandrite Thimi Theodos, 1948-1949. Since 1949 Rev. Vasil George has been the pastor.

The original Church Committee was composed of the following officers: Loni Peristere, Chairman; Efthim Kreshpani, Treasurer; Nuchi T. Cojo, Secretary; Pandi Vangel, Kristo Kosta, and Kozma Angelo.

The following parishioners have served as Chairman of the Church Committee: Loni Peristere, 1927; Lambi T. Dishnica, 1928; Avram Theodos, 1929; Vasil Sticka, 1930; Nuchi Cojo, 1931; Peter Spiri, 1932; Ligor Petro, 1933; Pandi Mboria, 1934; Vasil Sticka, 1935; Themistokli Verdy, 1936; Ligor Petro, 1937; Kosta Mangelly, 1938-1939; Kocho Checani, 1940; Efthim Kreshpani, 1941; Spiro A. Thomas, 1942; Lambi Kreshpani, 1943; John Zicko, 1944; Themistokli Verdy, 1945; Nicholas Christie, 1946; Thomas Verra, 1947-1948; Vasil Tutunu, 1949; Ralph D. Raphael, 1950; Kosta Mangelly, 1951-1952; Vasil Sticka, 1953; Peter James, 1954-1955; Kosta Carroll, 1956-1957; Peter S. Thomas, 1958-1959.

The present Church Committee is composed of the following members: Peter S. Thomas, Chairman; Stavri Ropi, Vice-Chairman; George Zicko, Treasurer; Serge Grandoni, Secretary; Kosta Mangelly, Louis Vangel, Vingo Arthur.

The Ladies' Auxiliary "Vetetima", was formed in 1935. The choir was organized in 1917. Its first conductor was
NATICK CHURCH COMMITTEE. Left to right: Louis Vangel, Peter Thomas, Chairman, Leo George, Cantor, Rev. Vasil George, Pastor, George Zicko, Treasurer, Stavri Ropi, Vice-Chairman, Yiago Arthur.
NATICK SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND PUPILS. Teachers, standing, left to right, back row: Antoinette Arthur, Irene Tutuny, Pandel Apostol, Rev. Vasil George, Director, Priftireska Vasil George, Miss Violet Tutuny, Ethel George, Virginia George.
Professor Thomas Nasi. The present conductor is Theodore Stamulli.

The Sunday School was organized in 1949. It has an enrollment of forty-five pupils.

CHURCH OF ST. MARY’S ASSUMPTION
WORCESTER, MASSACHUSETTS

On August 13, 1911 the Albanians of Worcester organized a Chapter of St. George Cathedral, Boston with a Committee composed of the following members: Andon N. Dudo, Koli Vesho, Stavre Thamel, and Kosta Fano. Four years later, in 1915, this branch was organized into the Church of St. Mary’s Assumption with a Committee composed of the following members: Kosta Peter, Zissi Morcka, Toli Kondakchi, and Stavre Sotir. The priests
who served with this Committee were Rev. Damian Angeli, Rev. Naum Cere, and Rev. Stathi Melani.

From 1911-1917 services were held in various halls. In 1918 a building in which the present church is housed at 63 Wellington Street was bought. Two special Committees were elected to raise the money necessary for the acquisition of the new building. The Men's Committee was composed of the following members: Rev. Pando Sinitza, Kristo Gergo, Stavre Sotir, Vaske Kosta, Miche Grigor, Ndini Bani, and Visso Nano. The Ladies' Committee was composed of the following members: Filla Sotir, Aglaia K. Mina, Bessie L. Cianko, Constandina V. Steffo, and Lenka V. Adham.

After the purchase of the church building, the following priests have served in the parish: Rev. Pando Sinitza, from May 5, 1918 until 1920; Rev. Thimi Theodos, later Archimandrite, from April 3, 1921 until October 11, 1925;

![Worcester Church Committee, 1915-1916. Left to right, seated: Stavre Sotir, Costo Peter, Zissi Morska. Standing: Toli Bersat, Thimi Mina.](image-url)
WORCESTER CHURCH COMMITTEE, 1958. Left to right, seated: George Jarras, Chairman, Vassil Stamnoi, Vice-Chairman, Michael Adamou, Secretary, Peter Cussey, Treasurer. Standing: George Pujami, Paudi Sripo, Anthony George, Peter Ettico, Pefte Naum.
Rev. Naum Cere, from October 11, 1925 until June, 1927; Rev. Thimi Theodos, from September, 1927 until April 4, 1946. The Very Rev. Sokrat Soter has served as the pastor of the Church since April, 1946.

The Church Committee of 1938 was composed of the following members: George Jarras, Chairman, William Stammo, Michael Adams, Peter Cassery, George Pojani, Pandi Spiro, Sotir Naum, Anthony George, and Peter Ethim.

The parishioners who have served as Chairman of the Church Committee are the following: Kosta Peter, 1915-1916; Koli Koki, 1917; Kosta P. Tontonazi, 1918; Stavre Sotir, 1919; Kosta Vasil, 1920; Ilo Kovachi, 1921; Stavre Themel, 1922-23; Rev. Thimi Theodos, 1924; Stavre Sotir, 1925; Vani Steffo, 1926; Stavre Themel, 1927; Ligor Steffo, 1928-29; Vasil Peter, 1930; Andrew Nikolla, 1931; Stavre Themel, 1932; Vasil Peter, 1933; Vangel Sotir, 1934-1935; Ligor Steffo, 1936; Koli Vessio, 1937; Vangel Sotir, 1938; Ligor Steffo, 1939-1941; Alexander Kovachi, 1942; Vangel Sotir, 1943-1944; James Thanasi, 1945; Loni Peristere, 1946; Ernest Sotir, 1947; Vangel Sotir, 1948; Vasil Peter, 1949; Koli Kamenitza, 1950; Sotir Raphael, 1951-1952; George Vessio, 1953; Nick Vasil, 1954; Thoma Proko, 1955-1956; George Jarras, 1957-1958.

In 1940, thanks to the initiative and generosity of Archimandrite Thimi Theodos, the Monastery at Oxford, Massachusetts was bought by St. Mary's Church.

The Ladies' Auxiliary Society of the Church, "The Daughters of St. Mary," was organized in April, 1951. Its first chairman was Mrs. Mary Thamel.

"The Mothers' Club" of Worcester was founded on February 17, 1955 to promote the Sunday School. Its first
chairman was Mrs. Olga Chomo. The Sunday School now has one hundred and twenty pupils.

The choir was organized in 1917. Its first conductor was Professor Thomas Naxi. The present conductor is Lazo Vishnia.
COMMITTEE OF SUNDAY SCHOOL MOTHERS' CLUB. Seated: Mrs. Thomas E. Proko, President. Left to right, standing: Mrs. William Giantris, Secretary, Mrs. George E. Vangel, Vice-President, Mrs. John P. Haridi, Treasurer.

WORCESTER SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS. Left to right, seated: Miss Helen Prifyt, Miss Florence Gure, Mrs. Elese Vangel, Mrs. Margaretta Proko, Miss Helen Dimitri, Standing: Louis Giantris, Miss Elizabeth Naneb, Miss Mary Prifyt, Miss Dorothy Dimitri, Miss Katherine Proko, Miss Carol Giantris, Robert Pano.


WORCESTER SUNDAY SCHOOL PUPILS, CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE CLASS. Left to right: Miss Elizabeth Nano, Teacher, Miss Carol Giastris, Miss Dorothy Giastris, Miss Ellen Shtika, Richard Hughes, William Liger, Nicholas Sfero, Miss Florence Gure, Teacher.
CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS
SOUTHBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Although Albanians settled in Southbridge, Massachusetts before 1906, religious services in Albanian did not originate until that year. Their first place for worshipping God in the Albanian language was a house on Page Hill in Southbridge. The first building of our Saint Nicholas Church was begun on May 26, 1912 and was completed in August of that same year. It was the first church in the world built by Albanians, in which God was worshipped in the Albanian language.

The founders were the following: Spiro Nacho Pora-
deci, Gioka Kozma, Lazar Kozma, Dhimitri Jovan Tushemishti, Koli Thanas Vithkuki, Tasi Moni Vithkuki, Nasi Kota Vithkuki, Tasi Kita Vithkuki, Naum Deshna, Nase Picinan Berati, Gaki Viske Venetik, Paskal Mitro Grabocka, and Lambi Michael Floki, who later became a priest. The first Church Committee consisted of the following members: Vangel Naum Shtika, Vasil Naum Kamenica, Zissi Jorgi Tushemishti, Lipe Kostandin Nicha, Dhimitri Jovan Tushemishti, and Petro Anastas Leshnia. Dhimitri Jovan Tushemisti served as Secretary and Petro Anastas Leshnia, as Treasurer.

In 1941, due to the growth of the Albanian colony in Southbridge, the present modern building was erected on the site of the original building. The momentous decision to erect a new building resulted from a meeting held in Eagles Hall, Main Street, under the leadership of the late Father Lambi Michael and Dr. John T. Nasse. Albanians throughout the United States contributed generously to the Building Fund of this new church. Among the untiring solicitors were the following three ladies, who traveled throughout New England: the late Marina Simeon Trebicka, Mrs. Thomaidha Vasil Opingari, and Mrs. Poliksenia Sotir George.


In the year 1958 the members of St. Nicholas Church, through the efforts of Dr. John T. Nasse and the other members of the Land Committee, acquired an adjacent
SOUTHBRIDGE CHURCH COMMITTEE, 1968. Left to right: George Costa, Pandely Michael, Secretary, Gregory L. Mitre, Chairman, Thomas Cheka, Vice-Chairman, Tsesi Mouli, Dr. John T. Nasse, Treasurer, Dennis Vangel.
COMMITTEE OF THE DAUGHTERS OF ST. NICHOLAS. Left to right: Mrs. Dorothy Chritis, Treasurer, Chelanthri Michael, Xanthippe Kosta, Chairman, Arainou Jovan, Beasie Bachka, Secretary.

parcel of land near the church to serve the dual purpose as a parking lot and as picnic grounds for the church.

The present church membership is about eighty members with a large portion coming from Springfield, Massachusetts. The Church Committee for the year 1958 consisted of the following: President, Gregory L. Tite; Vice-President, Thomas Cheka; Secretary, Pandely Michael; Treasurer, Dr. John T. Nasse; George Costa, Tasi Moni, and Dennis Vangel.

The Ladies' Auxiliary of the church, "The Bee", was founded in the year 1932.

The church choir was organized in 1917: Professor Thomas Nassi was its first conductor. The present conductor is George Vasil.

The following parishioners have served as Chairman of the Church Committee: Petro Spiri, 1931; Rapi Mihal,
1932; Kosta Athanas, 1933; Sotir Kosta, 1934; Spiro Mihal, 1935; Harry Theodhos, 1936; Paskal Metro, 1937; Vasil Opingari, 1938-1939; Pandi Mihal, 1940; Z. Dano, 1941; Adam Zoto, 1942; Paskal Metro, 1943; Vasil Opingari, 1944; Dhimitri Pojani, 1945; Sotir Kosta, 1946; Harry Theodhos, 1947; Petro Athanas, 1948; Sotir Kosta, 1949; Miche Pappas, 1950; Nisi Vangel, 1951; Paskal Metro, 1952; Vangel Kosta, 1953; Dhosi Kitta, 1954; Paskal Metro, 1955; Nuchi Kosta, 1956; Tasi Moni, 1957; Ligor Tite, 1958.
CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE
BRIDGEPORT, CONNECTICUT

On Palm Sunday, April 12, 1925 the first church service in Albanian was conducted in Bridgeport, Connecticut in a chapel of the St. John Episcopal Church, located at Park and Fairfield Avenues. In the same year a temporary Albanian Church Society was organized with the following members of its Executive Committee: Louis Theodos, President; James Vani, Vice-President; Philip C. Cotmil, Treasurer; James Tallcough, Secretary.

In April, 1935 regular services were initiated by the late Rev. Vasil Mandi. The services were conducted in a
hall on the second floor of the Staples Bank Building at the corner of State and Bank Streets. The congregation enjoyed the free use of the hall for several years. This first church was known as the St. Thomas Albanian Orthodox Church.

On May 12, 1935 the present church organization was formed. It was composed of the following officers and trustees: Louis Theodos, President; James Vani, Vice-President; Philip C. Cotmil, Treasurer; George R. Polena, Secretary; Peter Tollkuch, Sotir Dimitri, Peter Athanas, Theodore Dionis, C. A. Jordhamo, and Costa Vangel.

In the same year the Church was re-named the St. George Albanian Orthodox Church by George Dionis, who acted as godfather after donating the highest amount in a drive to raise funds for a permanent church building. On May 16, 1937 the Albanian congregation purchased the Roman Catholic Church of St. Peter at 521 Howard Avenue, which is still used for services.


The following parishioners have served as Chairman of the Church Committee: Louis Theodos, 1925-1939; E. V. Leshney, 1940; Vassil Cici, 1941; George J. Tollkuch, 1942-1943; Mikel Costa, 1944-45; C. A. Jordhamo,
BRIDGEPORT CHURCH COMMITTEE, 1958. Left to right: Thomas LaBache, Corresponding Secretary; Norman Punelli, Financial Secretary; F. T. Lesheney, Chairman; Louis Pando, President; Rev. Alexander Kovitch, C. A. Jordhamo, Vice-President; George R. Polena, James Kavol, Treasurer; Lillian George, Corresponding Secretary.
COMMITTEE OF TEUTA. Left to right, seated: Mrs. Margarita Jordhamo, Treasurer, Mrs. Olga A. Gluckonis, Secretary, Mrs. Mary Nichola, Chairman, Mrs. Magda Leskow, Vice-Chairman. Standing: Mrs. Kostandina Christo, Mrs. Dimoklia Athanas, Prayer Leader, Mrs. Zoicha Boris.

On October 13, 1929 the Society "Ylli" was founded, with the following executive Committee: Philip C. Cotmil, President; Theodore Dionis, Vice-President; George Tollkuch, Secretary. On July 4, 1931 this society took part in the International Pageant of the International Institute. On May 12, 1935 this society donated $1,000.00 toward the purchase of the church building which is still used by the parish.

On October 12, 1931 the Ladies' Auxiliary Society "Teuta" was organized. This society did an outstanding job in selling Defense Bonds during the second World War.

In 1954 the Eastern Orthodox Council was organized, embracing six Eastern Orthodox Churches of Bridgeport. Every year all these congregations participate in a Pontifical Liturgy conducted in the various churches in rotation.

The Sunday School was organized in 1942. Today it has sixty pupils.

The choir was organized in 1938, and its first conductor was Ilo Kovachi. The present conductor is Mrs. Mary Costa Wilan.

The following priests have served as pastors of this church: Rev. Vasil Mandi; Rev. Sotir Tollkuchi; Rev. Christo Costa. Rev. Alexander Kovachi has been serving as pastor since May 1, 1950.

The late Philip C. Cotmil, Sr. and Louis Theodos were both instrumental in shaping the destiny of the Church. The late George and Mrs. Alexandra Polena were principal benefactors of the Church. Memory Eternal!

This material has been compiled by a committee com-
posed of the following members: George R. Polena, Chairman; Steven C. Tallcouch, Philip C. Cotmil, Jr., Ellen Ndini.
THE CHURCHES OF THE DIOCESE
CHURCH OF ST. NICHOLAS
NEW YORK, N. Y.

On December 21, 1941 a group of Albanians of this city held a meeting at the Diplomat Hotel, 168 West 43rd Street, and appointed a temporary Church Committee composed of the following members: Elia Prifti, Chairman; Irahli Letcho, Secretary; James Nuni, Treasurer; James Viso, Ralph Naum Riza, Stavre Gioka, Sotir Pochi, Charles Kochi, and Thomas Shagla.

On March 15, 1943 Rev. Pandeli Checho was elected the first pastor of the Church.

On May 3, 1943 a regular Church Committee was appointed with the following members: Evans Liolin, Chairman; Elia Prifti, Vice-Chairman; Charles Kochi, Financial Secretary; Joseph Valsiliou, Assistant Financial Secretary; Vasil Kasuli, Recording Secretary; Thanas Piluri, Treasurer; Ralph Naum Riza, Irahli Letcho, Thanas Kallfa, Stavre Gioka, Peter Gregory.

At a meeting on June 3, 1943 the members of the parish decided to buy the Presbyterian Church located at 359 West 48 Street for the sum of $30,000.00. This building is still used for services. On September 12, 1943 the members decided to give the name of St. Nicholas to their church. On the same day the church choir was organized with Mrs. Evans Liolin as its first conductor. The present conductors are Mrs. Helen Liolin and Miss Dorothy Ligori.

On March 4, 1945 the Sunday School was started with thirty pupils under the direction of Mrs. Angelina Borzuk. The following priests have served in this church: Rev. Pandeli Checho and Mitred Archpriest Costa Belba, who is now the pastor.

The following parishioners have served as Chairman

The Ladies’ Auxiliary of the Church, “Daughters of St. Nicholas,” was founded on May 12, 1944. The first President was Mrs. Nick Borzuk. The present President is Mrs. Nick Nache.

The present Executive Committee of the Church of St. Nicholas is composed of the following members: Ralph Naum, Chairman; Vasil Kasuli, Vice Chairman; Larry Pillary, Treasurer; Kastriot Gregory, Financial Secretary; Alex Efthim and Todi Balli, Corresponding Secretaries; Louis Vasil, Recording Secretary; Christy Pochary, Peter Gregory, Arthur Kallfa, Nick Gregory, and Bill Naum.
COMMITTEE OF THE DAUGHTERS OF ST. NICHOLAS. Left to right, seated: Mrs. Peter Limor, Secretary, Mrs. Nicko Nacht, President, Mrs. Bill Nunn, Vice-President, Mrs. Louis Vasile, Financial Secretary. Standing: Mrs. Linzor Dimitri, Mrs. Michael Petrides, Mrs. Vasili Kasuli, Treasurer. Mrs. Constantine Vasili, Mrs. Ernest Kele piti, Mrs. James Nunn.
THE CHURCHES OF THE DIOCESE

THE CHURCH OF CHRIST THE KING
ALBANY, N. Y.

The Church of Christ The King, Albany, New York, was organized as a mission parish of the Old Catholic Church, in the Spring of 1950, by the Reverend Charles W. Campbell.

Over the years, efforts at rapprochement have been made between the Old Catholics and the Orthodox Church. In 1951 Father Campbell was one of a committee of Old Catholic bishops and priests authorized to discuss and seek reception into Orthodoxy with representatives of the Constantinople Patriarchate. Nothing tangible came of these discussions though a few years previously three Old Catholic parishes in Paris were received into the Church by the Patriarch of Moscow. On November 7, 1957 Metropolitan Fan S. Noli bestowed Orthodox ordination on Fr. Campbell and received the Albany parish into his jurisdiction, thus constituting the first Western Rite Orthodox parish in America. In 1958 the late Patriarch of Antioch, Alexandros, authorized the establishment of Western Rite Orthodox parishes in the United States.

Since its inception, the Church of Christ The King has exercised its evangelic ministry among the poor and un-churched. Its congregation and church committee have been inter-racial since the organization of the church. A modest and limited amount of social work is done by the Pastor and trained pastoral counseling service provided. While the Church owns a site for its future permanent home, it is now housed in humble rented quarters until it can afford to erect its own building. Possibilities for the extension of its ministry among Albanians and others who desire the
Byzantine Rite in the English tongue are now being explored.

The pastor graduated from St. Francis Theological Seminary in Chicago in 1946, receiving the S.T.B. Degree. He maintains himself and partially maintains the Church with a part-time secular job. He solicits the prayers and alms of all who read this statement.
CHURCH OF SS. PETER AND PAUL
ROCHESTER, N. Y.

On August 4, 1949 the Albanian Beneficial Society "Tomorri" was organized in Rochester. This society was the parent of the Church of SS. Peter and Paul. The first executive committee of "Tomorri" was composed of the following members: Vangel Rouvina, President; Elia Dimitri, Vice-President; Zissi Kerxhalli, Secretary; Vangel Guche, Treasurer; Sotir Vasil, Vangel Theodos, Teddy Kiriako, Sadik Pepellashi, Sotir Gikadhia, Mihal Jovan, Kostantine Dimitri, and George Stevens.

In 1953 the Church of SS. Peter and Paul was organized with the following temporary Church Committee: Vangel Theodos, President; Vangel Rouvina, Secretary; Mihal Jovan, and Demosten Nasse. On April 1, 1952, a mansion located at 706 East Avenue was purchased and
ROCHESTER CHURCH COMMITTEE, 1956. Left to right, seated: Peter Theodor, Secretary, Sotir Vassil, Chairman, Sotir Theodor, Vice-Chairman. Standing: Dennis Frifti, Christ Vissos, Thomas Vassil, Vasili George.

ROCHESTER CHURCH CHOIR. Left to right, seated: Helen Theodor, Alice Theodor, Jane Kerxhalli, Anna Theodor, Mary Ann Jovan, Virginia Theodor. Standing: Teddy Theodor, Organist, Peter Phillips, Mark Kerxhalli, Peter Jovan, Sotir Theodor, Jimmy Rouvias.
remodeled for regular services. The first liturgy was celebrated on August 2, 1953. Since then Rev. Sotir Dilogika has been the pastor.

The Ladies’ Auxiliary Society “Ylli” was founded on October 20, 1950. The present executive committee is composed of the following members: Krisanthis Theodora, Chairman; Annette Sotir Vasil, Vice-Chairman; Andromache George, Secretary; Louisa Prifti, Treasurer; Kalina Servu, Artemesia Christo, Lina Jovan, and Evanthia Theodore.

The Church Committee for 1958 was composed of the following members: Sotir Vasil, President; Sotir Theodore, Vice-President; Peter Theodos, Secretary; Vasil Kristo, Treasurer; Miss Virginia George, Miss Alice Theodore;
Dennis Prifti, Christo Visse, Thanas Vasil, Vasil George, Ziko Theodor, and Lonka V. Starova.

The Choir was started in 1953. Its first conductor was Alexander Van. The present conductor is Miss Vicky Barrett. The Sunday School was founded in 1955 with thirty pupils.
CHURCH OF ST. ELIJAH
JAMESTOWN, N. Y.

In 1911 Rev. F. S. Noli, later Metropolitan, conducted the first service in Albanian in Russell House on Third Street. From 1914 to 1919 the Albanians had regular services in that hall. From 1919 to 1925 they held services in the Odd Fellows Hall. In August, 1925 they moved to the Market Street Hall. In 1930 they built a church on Sprague Street, which was named after St. Elijah. The committee which built this church was composed of the following members: George Vishnia, Chairman; Nikolla Manno, Thanas Ndro, Louis Vrsho, Vani Dhima, Theodore Thomas, Thomas Shagla, Christo Duro, Alex Poda, and Charles Viska.

In 1955 they bought the Methodist Church and parish house, located at the corner of Palmer and Sprague Streets. This church is still used for Church services.
JAMESTOWN CHURCH COMMITTEE, 1958. Left to right, seated: Mrs. and Mr. Terry Duro, President. Standing: Joe Mann, Peter Bende, Trustee of the Building Fund, William Mann, Secretary, Jerry Connelly, Rev. George Loli, Pat Nary, Nick Poda, Vice-President, Peter Kote, Tom Lepkosi, Peter Semo, Treasurer, James Kotte.
On November 6, 1930 the Ladies' Auxiliary Society “Daughters of St. Elijah” was organized with fifty-eight members. The first executive committee was composed of the following members: Thomaidha Kate, Chairman; Virginia Miller, Vice-Chairman; Marguerite Telly, Secretary; Galatea Ford, Treasurer.

The following priests have served in this church: Rev. Damian Angeli, Archimandrite Vangel Chamche, later Bishop Agathangel, Rev. Vani Chani, Rev. George Suli, Rev. Peter Chala, Rev. Naum Cere, and Very Rev. H. V. Dode. Since 1944 Rev. George Loli has been serving as pastor of this Church.

The Church Committee for 1958 was composed of the following parishioners: Terry Duro, President; Nick Poda, Vice-President; Peter Semo, Treasurer; William Manno, Secretary; Mrs. Terry Duro, Joe Manno, Peter
COMMITTEE OF THE LADIES’ AUXILIARY OF ST. ELIJAH. Left to right, seated: Mrs. Gregor Getzka, Mrs. James Vishul, Mrs. Andon Ford, Mrs. Len Telly, Mrs. Helen Kate. Standing: Mrs. Peter Semo, Mrs. Andrew Shugin, Mrs. Perry Adams, Treasurer, Mrs. Paul Semo, Secretary, Mrs. Peter Miller, President.
JAMESTOWN SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS.

JAMESTOWN SUNDAY SCHOOL PUPILS.
Bendo, Jerry Connelly, Rev. George Loli, Pat Nary, Peter Kote, Tom Lepsisti, James Kotte, Anton Ford, Lambi Kotsi.


The Sunday School was founded in 1956 with twenty-seven pupils. The teachers were the following: Miss Virginia Semo, Miss Antonetta Manno, Miss Olga Connelley, Miss Margaret Page, and Miss Vassilika Ngela.

The Church choir was founded in 1937. Miss Virginia Semo was its first conductor.
THE CHURCHES OF THE DIOCESE

CHURCH OF SS. PETER AND PAUL
PHILADELPHIA, PA.

In 1915 the Albanians of Philadelphia, under the leadership of the late Stavro Semanak from Berat, decided to found an Orthodox Church. They started with 187 Charter Members. They rented a hall and remodeled it as an Orthodox Church. They named it in honor of the Apostles Peter and Paul. Their first service was conducted on Christmas Day, 1915, by Rev. Naum V. Cere.

In 1918 they bought the Presbyterian Church at the corner of Oxford and Hancock Streets, which they are still using for their services. On January 12, 1919 this church was dedicated by Archimandrite Fan S. Noli, later Metropolitan. The first Church Committee was composed of the following members: Lazar Hagistefa, Chairman; Petro Lio, Theodor Bussi, Elia Salepi, Vassil Boyaghi, and Lazar Geka.


The following parishioners have served as Chairman of the Church Committee: Michael Hondros, 1923-1925; Kristo Cici, 1926; Michael Hondros, 1927; Anastas Glighiri, 1928; Thimi Hondros, 1929-1930; Kristo Cici, 1931-1932; Irakli Toska, 1933-1948; Foto Kume, 1949-1956; Kosta Jano, 1957-1958.

The Ladies' Auxiliary Society of SS. Peter and Paul
CHURCH COMMITTEE OF SS. PETER AND PAUL. Left to right, seated: Dimitri Kolea, Vice-Chairman, Kosta Jano, Chairman, Petro Petcho. Standing: Thimi Vreto, Lazar Geka, Gregory Houndros, Secretary.

CHOIR OF SS. PETER AND PAUL. Left to right, first row: Mrs. Katherine Dimitri, Katherine Salepi, Dori Drokoniku, Lillian Salepi. Second row: Mrs. Betty Prifti, Virginia Dako, Dorothy Burdumi, Mary John, Anita Dako. Third row: Mary Vreto, Gregory Vreto, Peter Vreto, Harry Cappo.
COMMITTEE OF THE LADIES' SOCIETY OF SS. PETER AND PAUL. Left to right, seated: Minnie Droboniku, Olga Jano, Chairman, Sophia Kolen, Treasurer. Standing: Stephanie Geis, Catherine Dimitri, Martha Osborne, Secretary.
SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS OF SS. PETER AND PAUL. Left to right seated: Martha Osborn, Mary Palmerick, Anna Spunka. Standing: John Palmerick, Jennie Kotzri, Edna Bachelor, James Bachelor.

SUNDAY SCHOOL PUPILS OF SS. PETER AND PAUL.
was founded in 1935. Mrs. Anna Kollar was the first chairman of the executive committee. Mrs. Olga Jano is the present chairman.

The Sunday School was founded in 1929 with twenty pupils.

The Church choir was founded in 1935. Mr. Gregory Vreto is the present conductor.
Early in 1930 a group of Albanians founded the Church of St. John Chrysostom to serve their fellow-countrymen who lived in West Philadelphia and the suburbs. In the beginning they used a hall for their services. In October, 1930 they rented the church located at the corner of 17th and Summer Streets, which they are still using. In 1946 they purchased the church.

The following priests have served in this church: Rev.
CHURCH COMMITTEE OF ST. JOHN CHRYSTOSOM. Left to right, seated: Vasil Tounis, Chairman, Very Rev. H. V. Dode, Treasurer, Standing: Bill Setir, Mark Alex Petsis, Secretary, Charles A. Dardaris, Financial Secretary, John Steffs, Vice-Chairman.
COMMITTEE OF THE LADIES’ CLUB OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM. Left to right, seated: Mrs. Pauline Douris, Mrs. Julia Schwartz, Mrs. Florence Elia, Vice-President, Mrs. Kathleen Bendo, Secretary; Mrs. Mary Notokas, Treasurer, Mrs. Mary Cokas, Treasurer.

SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHERS AND PUPILS OF ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM. Teachers: Miss Gloria Gionis, Miss Sue Doukas.
THE CHURCHES OF THE DIOCESE


In 1951 the Sunday School was founded. Today it has thirty-two pupils.

In 1947 the Ladies’ Auxiliary Society of St. John Chrysostom was founded with seventy members.

In 1948 the Church choir was organized. Rev. John Sawchuk was its first conductor. The present conductor is Miss Julie Ticco.

The following parishioners have served as Chairman of the Church Committee: Miti Zalli, 1931-1932; Pando Pashko, 1933-34; James Hassi, 1935-36; Sokrat Pappas, 1937-38; Pando Pashko, 1939-40; James Hassi, 1941-42; Odis Notska, 1943-44; Ernest Zoto, 1945-46; Mandi Dimitri, 1947-48; Ernest Zoto, 1949; Philip Steffani, 1950-51; Menella Zoto, 1952; Philip Steffani, 1953; George Notska, 1954; William Stavro, 1955; Pando Pashko, 1956; Vasil Tsonis, 1957-1958.
The church organization of St. Premte was founded in July, 1938. Since that date services were conducted from time to time by the Jamestown priest. In 1953 the Church of Saint Premte was built at 10716 Jasper Road and is still used for services. Regular services were begun in November, 1955.

The first Church Committee was composed of the following parishioners: James Covey, Chairman; Dhori Janollari, Secretary; James Thomas, Treasurer; Laki Ticco, Vasil Andrew. The following parishioners have served as Chairman of the Church Committee: Vasil Thoma, 1956; Naum Athens, 1957; Kovy Petro, 1958. The Rev. Stephen Lasko has been the pastor since 1955.

The Ladies' Auxiliary Society of the "Daughters of St. Premte" was organized in 1956. In the same year the Sunday School was started with twenty-five pupils.
THE CHURCHES OF THE DIOCESE

CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS, DETROIT, MICH.
FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY BOOK
CHURCH OF ST. THOMAS
DEtroIT, MICh.

The first organization of the Orthodox Albanians of
Detroit was founded in 1929 in the home of Mr. and Mrs.
Racke Kamenitza. The meeting was attended by Messrs.
Marko Adams, James Cherava, Racke Kamenitza, Nuch
Leshnia, Nick Manusho, Oresti Rikashi, and Krati Samara.
Under the leadership of Mr. Kamenitza religious services
were conducted and social affairs were organized from
time to time.

In 1937-1938 the group was reorganized for the purpose
of establishing a church and became known as the Albanian
St. Thomas Association. The first chairman of the Associ-
ation was Peter P. Andon.

In 1943 the church building, located at 5780 Fourteenth
Street, was purchased. It was dedicated in 1945. The first
president of the Church Committee was Mr. Andrew
Adams.

In 1951 a new Church Building Committee was formed
with Chris A. Lepon as the first Chairman. In 1956 the
corner-stone dedication of the new St. Thomas Church,
located on Oakman Boulevard at Joy Road, was conducted
by Metropolitan Fan S. Noli. Thomas Peppo, the first
Chairman of the new Church Committee, will be re-
membered as the guiding spirit of this achievement. Evon
Miller was the Chairman of the Building Committee.
During these years of Church growth, S. Theodore Kotelly
served as legal advisor.

The following priests have served as pastors: Rev.
Diogen Econom, Rev. Sotir Tollkuchi, and Rev. Alexander
Kovachi. Since May 7, 1950, Rev. Christo Costa has served
as pastor.
THE CHURCHES OF THE DIOCESE

Besides those already mentioned, the following have served as Chairman of the Church Committee since 1944: James Bardy, Stephen Christo, Evon Miller, Spiro Page, Louis Christo Pendavini, Theodore Peppo, and George Vulpe. The present Chairman of the Board of Directors is Victor Chacho. The present Chairman of the Control Board is Gabriel P. Terova; the present Chairman of the Board of Supervisors is Helen Koc.

The ladies have always been and still are a great force in the Detroit community. The outstanding women pioneers were Athina Peppo, Glikeria Naum, and Andonia Gusho. The Ladies' Auxiliary of St. Thomas was organized in 1945. Mrs. Agathie Nichols was the first Chairman of the Ladies' Auxiliary. Its present Chairman is Mrs. Margaret Pandell.

In 1946 the Sunday School was organized with about forty children. This same year the Church choir was organized under the leadership of Gloria Broikos and Frances Terova. The present conductor is Dr. Bohdan Kushnir.

This historical sketch has been compiled by Mr. Victor Chacho.
LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES

AGATHANGEL CHAMCHE, BISHOP
Born in Korcha, Albania in 1875; ordained as priest on November 15, 1918; took monastic vows, and was elevated to the rank of Archimandrite in 1919; consecrated as Bishop in 1929; served as priest in Boston, Mass. and as Bishop of Berat in Albania; died in 1946. May he rest in peace.

ALEXANDER NEMOLOVSKY, ARCHBISHOP
Born in Russia in 1875; graduated from the Seminary of Zhitomir, and the Theological Academy of St. Petersburg in 1901; ordained as priest on November 25, 1901; took monastic vows and was elevated to the rank of Archimandrite on November 8, 1909; consecrated as Bishop of Alaska on November 15, 1909; appointed Bishop of Canada in 1916; elevated to the rank of Archbishop in 1919. Since 1919 he has been Archbishop of Brussels, Belgium.

ANGELI, REV. DAMIAN
Born in Berat, Albania in 1852; ordained as priest in 1883; served in Boston, Mass., Worcester, and Jamestown, N. Y., from 1910-1919; died in 1920. May he rest in peace.

ATHANAS, ANTHONY
Born in Trebicka, Albania, on July 28, 1912; married Esther Mitchell in 1940; four sons; successful businessman; awarded the medal of Knight of St. George.
LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES
AVGERINOS, REV. VANGEL
Born in Lukova, Albania on February 13, 1904; married Lucia Papadhatos in June, 1930; one son and two daughters; ordained as priest on August 11, 1937. Since 1958 he has been pastor of the Church of SS. Peter and Paul, Philadelphia, Pa.

BELBA, RT. REV. COSTA
Born in Korcha, Albania on March 15, 1885; married Vasilika Alex Joan on September 20, 1912; three sons and five daughters; ordained as priest, 1946; served in Philadelphia, Pa. from 1946-1948. Since 1948 he has been pastor of the Church of St. Nicholas, New York City, N. Y.

BLUSHI, JOHN STAVRO
Born on January 1, 1890 in Blushi, Albania; married Anastasia Kondil of Orgocka in 1918; two sons and one daughter; awarded the medal of Knight of St. George.

CAMPBELL, REV. CHARLES W.
Born in Albany, N. Y. on September 15, 1919; graduated from St. Francis Theological Seminary, Chicago, Ill. in 1946; ordained as priest on November 14, 1957. Since 1957 he has been pastor of the Church of Christ the King, Albany, N. Y.

CERE, REV. NAUM VANGEL

CHALA, REV. PETER
Born in Dishnitza, Albania in 1882; married Cleanthie
David in 1914; three sons and four daughters; ordained as priest on December 13, 1931; served in Jamestown, N. Y. from 1931-33, and Natick, Mass. from 1933-1938; died on February 10, 1938. May he rest in peace.

CHALAMANI, RT. REV. HARALAMP
Born in Albania in 1860; ordained as priest in 1890; took monastic vows and was elevated to the rank of Archimandrite in 1895; served in Turkey from 1890-1910; in Bucharest, Roumania from 1911-1922; in Valona, Albania from 1923-1928; was a missionary pioneer during the early years of our Church; died in 1929. May he rest in peace.

CHANI, VERY REV. VANI
Born in Korcha, Albania on December 12, 1885; married Eusebia Gonda on December 6, 1911; two sons and one daughter; ordained on September 20, 1925; elevated to the rank of Archpriest in 1936; served in Jamestown, N. Y. from 1925-1927; in St. Louis, Mo. from 1927-1930; in Southbridge, Mass. from 1930-1931; in Boston, Mass. from 1931-1943; died on May 10, 1943. May he rest in peace.

CHAYUPI, ANDON CHAKO
Born in Sheper, Albania in 1866; studied and practiced law in Cairo, Egypt; published in 1902 “Baba Tomorri” (Mt. Tomorri), a book of poems, which made him an outstanding poet and pioneer of the Albanian Renaissance; died in 1930. May he rest in peace.

CHECHO, REV. PANDO
Born in Permeti, Albania in 1885; married Anastasia Kosova in 1910; ordained as priest in 1943; served in St. Nicholas Church, New York City, N. Y. from 1943-1946; died on July 1, 1946. May he rest in peace.
LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES
CHRISTOPHER KISSI, METROPOLITAN ARCHBISHOP
Born in Berat, Albania in 1882; graduated with high honors from the Theological School of Halki, near Constantinople, Turkey in 1906; ordained as priest in 1908; consecrated as Titular Bishop of Synadon in 1917; appointed Metropolitan of Durazzo and Tirana, Archbishop of All Albania on April 12, 1937; resigned and retired in 1949; died on June 16, 1958. May he rest in peace.

CHRISTOPHER, VERY REV. NICHOLAS
Born in Katundi, Albania on November 28, 1859; married Helen Stevenson on September 13, 1882; two daughters; ordained as priest in December, 1917; elevated to the rank of Archpriest in 1938; served in Boston and Southbridge, Mass.; died on July 26, 1940. May he rest in peace.

COSTA, VERY REV. CHRISTO
Born in Koblara, Albania on October 14, 1908; married Kalire Fili on September 27, 1930; one son and one daughter; ordained as priest, July 18, 1943; elevated to the rank of Sakellar on September 7, 1952; served in Philadelphia, Pa. from 1943-1946; in Bridgeport, Conn. from 1946-1950. Since 1950 he has been pastor of the Church of St. Thomas, Detroit, Mich.

COSTA, MRS. THOMA
Born Athina Lazar Adam in Katundi on June 29, 1889; married Thoma Costa in 1904; awarded the medal of Knight of St. George.

DILOGIKA, REV. SOTIR
Born in Hoshteva, Albania on February 19, 1900;
married Agatha Mboke on May 4, 1919; one daughter; ordained as priest on June 21, 1953. Since then he has been serving as pastor of the Church of SS. Peter and Paul, Rochester, N. Y.

DINE, SPIRO

Born in Vithkuki, Albania in 1846; published in 1908 "Valet e Detit" (Waves of the Sea), a large collection of Albanian folklore; one of the leaders of the Albanian Renaissance movement; died in Shibin-el-Kom, Egypt in 1922. May he rest in peace.

DODE, VERY REV. HARALAMP V.

Born in Charshova, Albania on February 3, 1892; ordained as priest on July 12, 1944; elevated to the rank of Ikonom and Confessor on May 16, 1948; served in Jamestown, N. Y. from July 12, 1944 to May 28, 1944; in Boston, Mass. from June 4, 1944 to March 3, 1946; in Philadelphia, Pa., Church of SS. Peter and Paul, from March 10, 1946 to November 30, 1947; in Chicago, Ill. from December 7, 1947 to June 30, 1953. Since October 4, 1953 he has been pastor of the Church of St. John Chrysostom, Philadelphia, Pa.

ELIA, DR. ANDREW

Born in Nivani, Albania on August 13, 1906; graduated from Boston University Medical School in 1935; volunteered in the United States Naval Service in 1943; discharged as Lieutenant Commander in 1946; Assistant Professor of Clinical Obstetrics and Gynecology at Boston University School of Medicine; visiting obstetrician and gynecologist at Massachusetts Memorial Hospitals, Boston; married Dr. Dimetra Tsina in 1933; one son and one daughter; awarded the medal of Knight of St. George.
LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES

ELLIS, VERY REV. CHRISTO E.
Born in Ochishti, Albania on April 1, 1892; married Madeleine Theodore on December 24, 1944; ordained as priest on April 22, 1951; elevated to the rank of Ikonom and Confessor in 1957. Since 1951 he has been Dean of St. George Cathedral, South Boston, Mass.

FILLOTHE DUNI, BISHOP
Born in Dhermi, Albania in 1886; ordained as priest in 1923; consecrated as Bishop in 1952. Since then he has been serving as Bishop of Korcha, Albania.

FLOKI, REV. LAMBI MIHAL
Born in Floki, Albania in 1888; married Dhoxia Stoia Lubonia on November 6, 1911; three sons and three daughters; ordained as priest in 1923; served in Albania from 1923-1935, and in Southbridge, Mass. from 1935-1954; died on December 13, 1955. May he rest in peace.

GEORGE, REV. VASIL N.
Born in Poradetz, Albania on October 15, 1927; married Shpresa Pano on September 12, 1948; one son and two daughters; ordained as priest on April 17, 1949. Since then he has been pastor of the Church of St. Mary's Annunciation, Natick, Mass.

GRIGORIEFF, RT. REV. JACOB E.
Born in Kharkov, Russia on March 17, 1881; graduated from the Theological School of Kharkov in 1904; married Anna Tilmacheva on September 25, 1904; one daughter; ordained as priest on December 26, 1904; elevated to the rank of Mitred Archpriest in 1953; served in West Troy, N. Y. in 1905; in Salem, Mass. from 1905-1910; in Boston, Mass. from 1910-1938; in Ansonia, Conn. from 1938-1953; in Elizabeth, N. J. from 1953-1956. He retired on July 15, 1956. Died on February 29, 1960. May he rest in peace.
GURRA, MILTO SOTIR
Born in Mariani, Albania on May 15, 1884; novelist, and pioneer of the Albanian Renaissance; formerly of Manchester, N. H.; now living in Tirana, Albania. Some of his best works have been published in Albanian in a volume entitled "When Albania Was Reborn." This work was published in Tirana in 1958.

HALUSCHYNSKY, REV. ALEXANDER
Born in Zvinta county of Ukrainia, Russia on September 24, 1892; married Carotina Fomen on September 2, 1916; three sons and one daughter; ordained as priest on February 4, 1924; served in the Middle West from 1924-1942. Since 1942 he has been pastor of the Church of St. John the Divine, Boston, Mass.

HIERO THEOS ANDON YAH0, METROPOLITAN
Born in Charshova of Leskovik, Albania in 1878; graduated from the Theological School of Halki, Turkey in 1906; ordained as priest in 1906; took monastic vows and elevated to the rank of Archimandrite in 1907; consecrated as Bishop of Miletoupolis in 1911; appointed Exarch of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in 1923; appointed Metropolitan of Korcha in 1923; left Albania in 1929 and retired to Mt. Athos; died in 1956. May he rest in peace.

HOTOVITZKY, VERY REV. ALEXANDER
Born in Russia in 1870; graduated from the Volinsky Seminary and the St. Petersburg Theological Academy in 1895; ordained as priest in 1896; elevated to the rank of Archpriest in 1901; appointed Dean of the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of New York City in 1907; founded the American Orthodox Messenger in 1897, and edited
LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES

JANI JANOLLARI

MRS. ANTHINA PHILIP JOHN

VERY REV. DHOSI KATUNDI

KOLI ANDON KOBLARA

REV. MARK KONDILI

REV. ALEXANDER KOVACHI
it until 1915; raised the money for the construction of
the Russian Orthodox Cathedral of St. Nicholas, which
was built at 15 East 97 Street, New York City in 1903;
collected the money for the publication of Miss Isabel
Hapgood’s "Eastern Orthodox Service Book," the first
of its kind in English; died in Russia in 1930. May he
rest in peace.

JANOLLARI, JANI
Born in Blushi, Albania on May 14, 1897; married
Constantina Tabak of Dardha in 1931; one son; awarded
medal of Knight of St. George.

JOHN, MRS. PHILIP
Born Athina Pano in Katundi, Albania on July 25, 1880;
mARRIED Philip John in 1897; three sons and four
daughters; awarded medal of Knight of St. George.

KATUNDI, VERY REV. DHOSI
Born in Katundi, Albania on April 27, 1873; married
Thomaida Phillips in 1900; four daughters; ordained as
priest on January 14, 1920; served in Boston, Mass. from
1920-1943; died on December 23, 1943. May he rest in
peace.

KIRILL NASLALZI, BISHOP
Born in Polena, Albania in 1885; ordained as priest in
1925; consecrated as Bishop in 1952. Since then he has
been serving as Bishop of Berat, Albania.

KOBALA, KOLI ANDON
Born in Koblara, Albania on December 19, 1894;
mARRIED Leftheria Liko Zahar in 1920; one son and two
daughters; awarded medal of Knight of St. George.

KOLONIA, SHAHIN
Born in Kolonia, Albania about the middle of the XIX
Century; founder and editor of the Albanian newspaper,
LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES

VERY REV. LAZAR KOZMA

KOSTANDIN KRISTOFORIDI

REV. STEPHEN LASKO

REV. GEORGE LOLI

REV. VASIL MANDI

REV. STATHI MELANI
“Drita,” (The Light), of Sofia, Bulgaria; one of the leaders of the Albanian Renaissance; died in Albania. May he rest in peace.

KONDILI, REV. MARK
Born in Lekli, Albania in 1890; married Calypso Panayoti in 1914; one son and three daughters; ordained as priest in 1918; served in Philadelphia, Pa. from 1918 to 1946; died in 1947. May he rest in peace.

KONITZA, FAIK
Born on March 15, 1876 in Konitzka, Albania, then part of European Turkey and now part of Greece; received his Bachelor's Degree from the University of France in 1895, and the degree of Master of Arts from Harvard University in 1912; outstanding man of letters and leader in the Albanian Renaissance movement; published the magazine “Albania” from 1897-1909; editor of the Albanian weekly newspaper “Dielli” (The Sun), of Boston, Mass. from 1900-1910, and from 1921-1926; one of the founders and the first Secretary General of the Pan-Albanian Federation of America, Vatra in 1912, and it’s President from 1921-1926; Minister Pleni-potentiary of Albania during the reign of King Zog from 1926-1939; died in Washington, D. C. on December 15, 1942. May he rest in peace.

KOVACHI, REV. ALEXANDER
Born in Drenova, Albania on May 16, 1905; married Virginia Grecho on September 13, 1936; two sons; ordained as priest on June 1, 1949; served in Boston from June 1, 1949 to January 31, 1950; and in Detroit, Mich. from February 1 to March 31, 1950. Since May 1, 1951 he has been pastor of the Church of St. George, Bridgeport, Conn.
LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES

KOZMA, VERY REV. LAZAR
Born in Poradetz, Albania in 1881; married Naumka Sotir Stoiko in 1908; one son and two daughters; ordained as priest on April 11, 1921; elevated to the rank of Archpriest in 1930; served in Southbridge and Natick, Mass. from 1921-1931. He is now the pastor of the Church of Poradetz, Albania.

KRISTOFORIDI, KOSTANDIN
Born in Elbasan, Albania in 1827; graduated from the Zosimea Gymnasium of Janina, Greece; continued his studies in London, England; translated from Greek into Albanian the New Testament, which was published by the British Bible Society in 1875; published the Catechism of the Eastern Orthodox Church in Albanian in 1876; wrote a Dictionary of the Albanian Language which was published posthumously in 1904; died in 1895. May he rest in peace.

LASKO, REV. STEPHEN
Born in Maleshova, Albania on September 2, 1900; ordained as priest on June 20, 1949; took monastic vows and was elevated to the rank of Sakellar in 1953; served in Boston, Mass. from June, 1949 to September, 1950; in Philadelphia, Pa. from January, 1951 to April, 1955; in Southbridge, Mass. from May to September, 1955. Since then he has been the pastor of the Church of Saint Premte, Cleveland, Ohio.

LEONTY TURKEVICH, METROPOLITAN
Born in Kremenetz, Russia in 1876; graduated from the Theological Seminary of Volyn in 1895; received the degree of Master of Theology from the Theological Academy of Kiev in 1900; married Anna Chervinsky, who died in 1925; ordained as priest in 1905; appointed
FAIK KONITZA

RT. REV. VASIL MARKO

MR. & MRS. ELIAS MITCHELL

REV. CHRISTO NEGOVANI
LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES

Dean of the Russian Cathedral of St. Nicholas, New York City in 1915; took monastic vows, and was consecrated as Bishop of Chicago and Minneapolis in 1933; elevated to the rank of Archbishop in 1944. Since 1950 he has been Metropolitan of the Russian Orthodox Church in America, and President of St. Vladimir’s Seminary of New York City.

LOLI, REV. GEORGE
Born in Permeti, Albania on January 30, 1903; married Calliope Vaso on February 4, 1928; two sons and two daughters; ordained as priest on May 21, 1944. Since then he has been pastor of the Church of St. Elijah, Jamestown, N. Y.

LUARASI, CHRISTO
Born in Luarasi, Albania; founder of the first Albanian printing plant in Sofia, Bulgaria; published in Albanian the “Kalendar Kombiar” (National Calendar) for thirty years, from 1897 to 1927; a leading pioneer of the Albanian Renaissance; died about 1928. May he rest in peace.

LUARASI, PETRO NINI
Born in Luarasi, Albania in 1862; graduated from the Normal School of Kestorati in 1882; married Lina Kristo Sevo on August 16, 1887; four sons and three daughters; served as teacher in the first schools conducted in the Albanian language in Bezhani, Korcha, Erseka, Luarasi, and Negovani; founder and charter member of the oldest patriotic Albanian society in the United States, “Malli i Memedheut” (Love of Homeland), of Jamestown, N. Y.; leading pioneer of the Albanian Renaissance; murdered by pro-Greek fanatics in Luarasi, Albania on August 15, 1911. May he rest in peace.
MANDI, REV. VASIL
Born in Cherka, Albania in 1854; married Frosina Gergo in 1880; two sons and two daughters; ordained as priest in 1878; served in Albania from 1878 to 1932, and in Bridgeport, Conn. from 1932 to 1937; died in 1939. May he rest in peace.

MARKO, RT. REV. VASIL
Born in Borova, Albania in 1888; married in 1909; one daughter; ordained as priest in 1918; elevated to the rank of Mitred Archpriest in 1930; served in St. Louis, Mo. from 1917-1920; and in Korcha, Albania from 1921-1949; died in 1949. May he rest in peace.

MELANI, REV. STATHI
Born in Melani, Albania in 1858; married Constantina Logo in 1888; five sons and four daughters; ordained as priest in 1899; elevated to the rank of Ikonom in 1908; served in Albania from 1899 to 1914; and in Boston, Mass. from 1915 to 1917. He was murdered in Albania by pro-Greek fanatics in 1917 for using the Albanian language in the Church services. May he rest in peace.

MISHO, NICHOLAS
Born in Lubonia, Albania on June 24, 1906; married on December 9, 1934; two daughters; awarded the medal of Knight of St. George.

MITCHELL, ELIAS
Born in Stratoberdha, Albania on May 15, 1877; married Anastasia Josif Christo on January 10, 1906; two sons and five daughters; served as Chairman of the Church Committee of St. George Cathedral and Treasurer of the Diocese for several terms. He was the first to be awarded the medal of Knight of St. George.
MITKO, EFTHIM
Born in Korcha, Albania; published in 1873 the first and best collection of Albanian folksongs, entitled "Mbleta," (The Honey Bee); one of the early leaders of the Albanian Renaissance, died March 22, 1890. May he rest in peace.

NACHO, NICHOLAS
Born in Albania about 1841; the first outstanding leader of the Albanians of Roumania; founder and editor of one of the earliest Albanian newspapers in Bucharest, "Dituria"; one of the founders of the Albanian Orthodox Church of Bucharest; died in 1913: May he rest in peace.

NASSI, PROFESSOR THOMAS
Born in Dardha, Albania on March 23, 1892; graduated from the New England Conservatory of Music in 1918; married Olimbia Chika on February 2, 1919; one son and two daughters. He was the first to train choirs for the Cathedral of St. George in Boston and for the Churches of Natick, Worcester, and Southbridge, Mass. in 1916-1918. He was also the first to arrange the Byzantine liturgical responses in Albanian for mixed choirs.

NEGGOVANI, REV. CHRISTO
Born in Negovani, Turkey near the Albanian frontier in 1870; ordained as priest in 1895; served in his native town from 1895-1905; translated the Acts of the Apostles from Greek into Albanian; published several church books in Albanian. He was murdered on February 12, 1905 by pro-Greek fanatics for using the Albanian language in the services of his Church. May he rest in peace.

NICKOLLAUS, REV. NICHOLAS
Born in Durazzo, Albania in 1904; married Helen
LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES

Minick on June 21, 1941; one daughter; ordained as priest in 1946; served in the Church of St. John Chrysostom, Philadelphia, Pa. from 1946-1953; died in 1953. May he rest in peace.

NICOLAI ZIOROV, ARCHBISHOP
Born in Russia on May 20, 1851; graduated from the Theological Academy of Moscow in 1875; took monastic vows and was ordained as priest on October 1, 1887; elevated to rank of Archimandrite in 1889; Bishop of Alaska and San Francisco from 1891 to 1898; Archbishop of Tver, Russia in 1905; Archbishop of Warsaw in 1912; died in 1915. May he rest in peace.

NONI, RT. REV. CONSTANTINE
Born in Valona, Albania on January 5, 1901; took monastic vows and was ordained as deacon on September 25, 1923; ordained as priest and elevated to the rank of Archimandrite on April 30, 1942; served as Abbot of the Monastery of Kalishti, Albania until 1943; in Southbridge, Mass. from 1954-1955; in Philadelphia, Pa. from 1955-1958. Since August, 1958 he has been on leave of absence.

PAISI VODITZAI,
METROPOLITAN ARCHBISHOP
Born in Voditza, Albania in 1881; ordained as priest in 1910; took monastic vows and was elevated to the rank of Archimandrite in 1920; consecrated Bishop of Korcha in 1948; appointed Metropolitan of Tirana and Archbishop of All Albania in 1949.

PETERSON, MRS. DHIMA
Born Anastasia Lazi Mitchell in Katundi, Albania on January 18, 1883; married Dhima Peterson in 1903; two sons; awarded the medal of Knight of St. George.
LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES

PETSİ, SOTİR
Born in Dardha, Albania about 1863; studied mathematics in the University of Athens, Greece; outstanding leader of the Albanian Renaissance; published the newspaper "Kombi" (The Nation) in Boston, Mass. from 1906 to 1909; served as member of the Council of Regency in Tirana, Albania from 1920 to 1924; died in 1933. May he rest in peace.

PLATON ROZHDESTVÉNSKY,
METROPOLITAN
Born in Kursk, Russia on February 26, 1866; graduated from Kiev Seminary in 1887, and received his Master's Degree from the Kiev Theological Academy in 1898; ordained as priest in 1887; took monastic vows and was elevated to that rank of Archimandrite in 1898; consecrated as Bishop of Chigirin on June 3, 1902; appointed Archbishop of North America and arrived in New York on September 19, 1907. On March 8, 1908 he ordained Fan S. Noli as priest. On August 31, 1917 he was appointed Metropolitan of Odessa, Russia; elected ruling Archbishop and Primate of the Russian Orthodox Church in America in 1924; died on April 20, 1934. May he rest in peace.

PRİFTİ, REV. MINA

RAPHAEL HAWAWEENY, BISHOP
Born on November 8, 1860 in Damascus, Syria; gradu-
ated from the Theological School of Halki, near Constantinople, Turkey on July 18, 1886, and from the Theological Academy of Kiev in 1888; ordained as priest on July 16, 1888; took monastic vows and was elevated to the rank of Archimandrite in 1888; consecrated as Bishop of Brooklyn on March 13, 1904; died on February 27, 1915. May he rest in peace.

REHOVA, VERY REV. NICHOLAS
Born in Rehova, Albania on May 15, 1888; married Anna Labani on July 26, 1907; ordained as priest on October 20, 1930; elevated to the rank of Archpriest in 1938; served in St. Louis, Missouri from 1930-1933; in Southbridge, Mass. from 1933-1934; in the Church of SS. Peter and Paul, Philadelphia, Pa. from 1935-1942; died on December 4, 1942. May he rest in peace.

RISKA, GARY G.
Born in Vithkuki, Albania on August 15, 1915; married Olga Christophe of Verdun, Canada on February 24, 1946; two sons and one daughter; served as Lay Chairman of the Diocese from 1955-1959; awarded the medal of Knight of St. George.

SINITZA, REV. PANDI
Born in Sinitza, Albania in 1872; ordained as priest in 1917; served in Worcester, Mass. from 1917-1920 as the first regular priest of that parish; died in 1920. May he rest in peace.

SOFRON BOROVA, BISHOP
Born in Borova, Albania on May 15, 1882; ordained as priest in 1928; consecrated Bishop in 1952. Since then he has been serving as Suffragan Bishop in Tirana.
LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES

SOTER, THE VERY REV. SOKRAT
Born in Treska, Albania in 1900; married Athina Nacho in 1921; three sons and two daughters; ordained as deacon in 1945 and as priest in 1946; elevated to the rank of Ikonom on October 19, 1958; served as deacon in Boston from 1945-1946. Since 1946 he has been pastor of the Church of St. Mary’s Assumption, Worcester, Mass.

SOTIR, THE VERY REV. ANASTAS
Born in Ghianchi, Albania in 1877; married Alexandra Sotir in 1905; three sons and two daughters; ordained as priest in 1910; elevated to the rank of Ikonom in 1952; served in Albania from 1910-1936; in Boston, Mass. from 1936-1955; died in 1955. May he rest in peace.

SULI, REV. GEORGE
Born in Lekli, Albania on April 29, 1893; married Fotinie Vardami; one son and three daughters; ordained as priest on June 9, 1929; served in Jamestown, N. Y. in 1929; in Southbridge, Mass. from 1929-1930; in the Church of SS. Peter and Paul, Philadelphia, Pa. from 1930-1934; died in Albania on January 28, 1948. May he rest in peace.

TASHKO, THANAS
Born in Korcha, Albania in 1863; married Helen Zografi on September 6, 1898; three sons and three daughters; pioneer of the early Albanian Renaissance; published a Greek version of Sami Frasheri’s “Albania,” which Fan Noli had translated from Albanian into Greek in 1905; published an Albanian newspaper called “Shkopi” from 1905-1907; died in Egypt in 1915. May he rest in peace.
LIST OF BIOGRAPHIES

TASHO, PETER
Born in Goshtivisht, Albania on May 13, 1888; married Vasilika Tashko in 1922; two sons; awarded the medal of Knight of St. George.

THEODORE, RACO
Born in Poyani, Albania on March 9, 1889; in 1913 married Magalina Anastas; three sons; after the death of his first wife he married Victoria Tebbets in 1949; awarded the medal of Knight of St. George.

THEODOS, RIGHT REV. THIMI
Born in Katundi, Albania in 1886; ordained as priest in 1921; took monastic vows and was elevated to the rank of Archimandrite in 1933; served in Worcester, Mass. from 1921-1946; in Boston, Mass. from 1946-1949; founded the Monastery of St. Mary at Oxford, Mass.; helped to raise money for the purchase of the Cathedral of St. George; died in 1949. May he rest in peace.

THEOPHILUS PASHKOVSKY, METROPOLITAN
Born in Russia on February 6, 1874; consecrated as Bishop of Chicago on November 27, 1922; appointed as Metropolitan Archbishop in 1934; founded St. Vladimir’s Academy in New York City in 1938; died in June, 1950. May he rest in peace.

TIKHON BELLAVIN, PATRIARCH
Born in Pskov in 1865; graduated from St. Petersburg Academy; ordained as priest in 1891; consecrated as Bishop of Lublin in 1897; Bishop of San Francisco and Alaska, 1898-1904; Archbishop of North America,
1905-1907; Archbishop of Yaroslav, Russia, 1907-1913; Archbishop of Vilna, Lithuania, 1913-1917; appointed Metropolitan of Moscow on August 31, 1917; Patriarch of Moscow and of all Russia from 1917-1925; died on April 8, 1925. May he rest in peace.

TOLLIKUCHI, REV. SOTIR
Born in Polena, Albania in 1880; married Helen Veshko in 1910; four sons and three daughters; ordained as priest in 1926; served in Albania from 1926-1937; and in Bridgeport, Conn. from 1937-1952; died in 1954. May he rest in peace.

VANGEL, VANI
Born in Korcha, Albania on August 10, 1865; married Julia Bara in 1900; five sons and two daughters; pioneer of the Albanian Renaissance; founder and treasurer of the society of "Malli i Memedheut," of Jamestown, N. Y. He died on December 21, 1937. May he rest in peace.

VISSARION JUVANI, METROPOLITAN
Born in Elbasan, Albania in 1897; graduated from the School of Theology of the University of Athens on November 24, 1918; consecrated as Bishop in 1928; served as Metropolitan of Tirana and Archbishop of All Albania from January 1, 1929 to June 1, 1936; died in 1959. May he rest in peace.

VRUHOS, JANIS
Born in Vertopi, Albania; pioneer of the early Albanian Renaissance; assistant editor of "Shkopi," the newspaper founded by Thanas Tashko of Fayoum, Egypt; died in Wasta, Egypt. May he rest in peace.
Church Books in English
Translated and Compiled by
METROPOLITAN FAN STYLIAN NOLI, Mus. B., Ph. D.
Published by the Albanian Orthodox Church in America

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THE BEATITUDES, Rimsky-Korsakov
INTROITS (PRIDITE), Reboliv, Chaikovsky, and Arkhiereskoye
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THRICE-HOLY (TRISFIATOYE), Arkhangelsky, Chaikovsky, Bortniansky, and Arkhiereskoye
CHERUBIMIC HYMNS, Bortniansky Nos. 5 and 7; Smirnov, No. 3; Allemann, No. 2; Lomakin, No. 9; Holy Thursday, Lvov
CREED (VERUYU), Bereovsky, Rimsky-Korsakov, and Zadonskoye
PEACE AND MERCY (MILOST MIRA), Rimsky-Korsakov, Starorusky, Vinogradov, Feofanovskoe, Traditional from St. Basil's Liturgy
TO THREE WE SING (TEBE POEM), Smirnov, Rozhnov, Vasil'ev, Lomakin, Allemann, Chaikovsky
PRAISEWORTHY (DOSTOJNO), Bortniansky, Pontifical, and Kievskoye
THE LORD'S PRAYER (OTCHE NASH), Sheremetev, Smirnov, and Rimsky-Korsakov
O PRAISE YE (HYALITE), Arkhangelsky, Lomakin
SHINING TORCHLIGHT (SFETE TIKHI), Ivoretsky and Arkhangelsky
NOW DISMISS (NINIYE OTPUSHAEHY), Arkhangelsky
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b) It is the first, and up to the time of its publication, the only Eastern Orthodox translation of its kind.
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