

Rumania and Its Capital



Rumanian Girl Coming From Market.

By JOHN OLIVER LA GORCE.

With unsettled Russia just over her border, and the border itself in dispute, Rumania is conducting a watch on the Danube, the boundary which she claims, as vigilant as any that was ever set on the Rhine. Rumania has organized her government in Bessarabia, but the Russians have never consented to the severance of this former Russian province, and each movement of soviet troops toward the Danube has set Europe aflutter for fear a new war will break out in her southeastern corner.

However, it is not Bessarabia nor the other war-torn territories that have doubled Rumania's size, that are in the mind of the average person when Rumania is mentioned. He thinks rather of the pre-war nucleus, the little kingdom that since the Turk was pushed south, has stood enfolded by the lower Danube, the River Pruth and the Transylvanian Alps.

In the whirlpool of racial rivalries of southeastern Europe—where Roman and Goth, Hun and Slav, Magyar and Mongol, with all of their descendant peoples, have run over one another and been run over in their turn—fate left the Rumanians in the majority in a territory of more than 90,000 square miles. It scattered more than 12,000,000 of them over these lands—more than 7,000,000 in old Rumania and some 5,000,000 elsewhere.

The old Rumania was a country of 53,000 square miles, with a population of less than 8,000,000. It was thus slightly larger than Pennsylvania, although it had half a million fewer people than the Keystone state. The new Rumania has an area of 122,000 square miles and a population of 17,000,000.

The country is governed by a king, who is a constitutional monarch, and a parliament made up of a senate and a chamber of deputies. The pre-war constitution was rather reactionary, with the masses practically disfranchised. The new constitution, however, is more liberal, permitting voting by all citizens over 21 years of age, paying taxes.

Small Farms and Big Estates.

Industrially Rumania is almost entirely given over to agriculture, and, area for area, it produces more cereals than any other great grain-producing nation in the world. Before the World War its farm lands were about equally divided between the small farmer and rich land-owner. There were about a million farms with an average size of eight acres, and then there were over 4,000 estates with an average size of 2,200 acres. Since the conclusion of the World War steps have been taken to break up many of these large estates and to create a body of peasant proprietors.

The result of the occurrence of both huge estates and tiny farms is that one finds the strangest contrasts in farming methods. Here is a big estate where every sort of farm machinery that the United States has to offer is to be found—the binder, the mower, the steam gang plow, the riding cultivator, the manure spreader and even the steam header and thrasher. And then hard by are a hundred small farmers who still harvest their grain with the sickle, thresh it with the flail, or tread it out with oxen and winnow it with the home-made fork. They mow their grass with the scythe, rake it with the hand rake and haul it in with ox-carts. But even with the very primitive methods that characterize half of the farming of the country, they manage to coax a rather bountiful crop out of the soil.

The great bulk of Rumania's population belongs to the peasant class, for there are comparatively few cities and most of them are small. Many of the peasant families have lived for genera-

tions on the great estates, farming for the absentee landlords.

An interesting class the Rumanian peasants form, with their peculiar customs, their striking superstitions, their primitive ways of looking at things in general.

No Race Suicides Here.

The evil of race suicide has never invaded rural Rumania. It is regarded as worthy of honor to be the head of a numerous family. As in all lands where many of the people are more or less illiterate, there is a high death rate, though the fact that the bottled baby is almost unknown in peasant Rumania tends to overcome the high infant mortality that would otherwise result.

"Many hands make light work" is a proverb of the Rumanian peasant, often put into practice. Almost every night there is a neighborhood gathering like the old-fashioned apple-cutting or apple-butter boiling in early American rural history.

One-third of the area of the country toward the north and west is inhabited by semi-civilized shepherds. Up in the Carpathians in summer and down in the sheltered valleys in winter they lead their flocks, sleeping in the open with them and despoiling any other shelter than that which primitive nature and the starry sky afford. They seldom speak; indeed, their solitary lives leave them little opportunity for conversation.

But if there is primitive simplicity in Rumanian peasant life, there is ultra formality in the polite circles of Bucharest, the national capital. "The Paris of the East" its inhabitants proudly call their city, and in the character of its architecture, the ways of its people, the prices in force at its hotels, it justly deserves the title it has vauntingly assumed.

Bucharest a Lively City.

This near-eastern metropolis is about equal in size to our own national capital, and yet it has twenty times as many restaurants and cafes, ten times as many streets lights and twice as many theaters. It is regarded as the most expensive place in the world for the well-to-do and the cheapest for the poor. Prices at the Hotel du Boulevard are higher than in New York or London, and travelers who have visited Monte Carlo's leading hotels and then journeyed to Bucharest have found its rates from 15 per cent to 25 per cent higher than those obtaining in the hostleries of Monaco.

But if their prices are high, their service and their food leaves nothing to be desired. The cuisine of the leading hotels and private homes is French, and money is no consideration—quality is paramount. Some of the finest restaurants east of Paris are in Bucharest, and the night life, with its passionate, pulsating gypsy music, its sparkling wine, its beautiful women, its scintillating jewels, its handsome men, is as gay and alluring as anything the world has to offer.

As to clothes, everybody who pretends to dress at all dresses in the mode of Paris and the gowns of the elite are as up-to-the-minute as those to be seen on the Champs Elysees. Gambling flourishes openly and high stakes are the rule rather than the exception. Many of the players own the farms as big as an American county and their incomes are proportionately large.

Surrounded on every side by the Slavic sea—the deep ocean of Russia, the bay of Serbia and the gulf of Bulgaria—who can say whether in future centuries the attrition of the Slavic tide will wear away the Rumanian shore, or whether the great war will have fixed political boundaries that will be as firm as the geographic boundaries themselves?

THE SYSTEM

By IDA W. GOULD

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When Peter Tomkins led blushing Sarah Leadbetter from the altar, the "system" had not marred their courtship. Sarah came of a line of forebears whose every detail of life had been ordered by system.

But to Peter she was radiant, neat, altogether bewitching, and brought quite a dowry.

The first two years, he being more or less under the spell of her beauty and pretty ways, did not perceive the bands tightening around his freedom.

She allowed him but one cup of coffee; his former limit had been three. Her smile paved the way for carrying her system unflinchingly into all branches of home economics.

In course of time twin boys blessed their union.

Salle began at once to introduce her system. Peter called her one morning at six to tell her that the boys were walling piteously.

"That's good," said Salle, with a lovely smile. "They must cry, Peter, an hour a day for their lung-strengthening stunt."

Salle resumed her association with the Ladies' Aid society, was regular in her attendance, efficient and systematic in all her work outside as well as in her home.

When the twins were three and a half years old, it happened that Tomkins, being at home for a brief vacation, and Salle due at an important meeting at the club, had been assigned the care of his boys.

Tomkins was astounded at finding Davy and Dot covered with molasses. The maid having left them a moment, they had made quick work of upsetting the sticky fluid, each smearing the other.

Bewildered, incredulous Tomkins saw Salle anxiously consulting her wrist watch. She saw the hour of her club meeting approaching.

With an amused survey of the submerged molasses-covered twins, she saw them being treated to first aid by their father, tossed him a kiss, saying, "You'll see that those boys will never again touch molasses. By-bye."

Away she went, and was on time, discharging her duties at the club to the last systematized detail, and poor Tomkins and the maid scraped, cleaned and comforted as best they could the unhappy twins.

At six o'clock every night the boys were marched to their beds.

Early in babyhood days they had realized the indomitable power of their mother's system. So they grew by rule, like little soldiers. When they were several years older, Mr. Tomkins ceased remonstrating with the author of the system. Her stereotyped reply to some of the feeble protests had been:

"Let the boys get into mischief, and the unpleasant results will teach them to avoid mischief."

Tomkins gradually roused himself to a high pitch of indignation at the system seemingly too formidable for home rule. It might do very well in business.

So time wore on until—did you ever hear of a boy who was insensible to the lure of the circus?

Salle emphatically said "No" to their pleadings. She had a dressmaker and could not be away.

Tomkins visited the private school where Davy and Dot were droversly uninterested in their work. He called Miss Prim from the classroom and demanded his boys.

Remonstrating, Miss Prim said, "But Mrs. Tomkins' system—"

She was interrupted by Tomkins. "Hang the system! Excuse me, Miss Prim; send the boys out here."

In a few moments out came the twins and he hurried them off to the circus grounds.

The twins certainly had a wonderful day, unalloyed by the system.

They were late getting home. Their mother had eaten in solitary state, and retired to her den to await the culprits.

In stalked the heroic father, laughing almost naturally, two hungry, tired sons joined feebly in his merriment. They consumed their meal in great enjoyment.

"Now," cried the victorious father, "now, what shall we say to na?"

The twins giggled. At that moment their mother walked in, majestic, pale.

"Peter Tomkins, do you realize what a liberty you took this afternoon, upsetting my system?"

"No," yelled Peter, "but let me tell you, Sarah Tomkins, I've overthrown your system. What's more, hang your system!"

"Oh—oh—" wailed the crestfallen Sarah.

"These boys are going to be boys, and not automatic boys. Look at them, Salle. Look at me, for your system exists no longer for them or for their father. Don't cry, Salle. You had to learn your lesson. So had I, now, boys, run up to bed. Next year we'll take your man."

Forestry From Air.

The forestry department of Ontario has decided to make an aerial reconnaissance of its unexplored northern territory, says the American Forestry magazine, and will spend at least 300 hours in sketching and photographing the timber resources of this little known region.

WONDERS OF THE CENTURY

Marvels That Are Accepted as Commonplace by the Citizen of the Present Day.

William Allen White, editor of the Emporia (Kan.) Gazette, in an editorial in Judge, says:

"The vast mystery of natural things is so baffling that it is no wonder the mysteries of the supernatural are neglected in these days of marvels. The big, imponderable old world is shrinking and revealing itself as a speck of cosmos around which its inhabitants may ride in a few weeks, write in a few minutes and talk in a few seconds.

"Within the memory of living men the railroad has divided distances by ten and steam and electricity have speeded up time in the ordinary processes of life's business a hundredfold. Middle-aged people can recall the days when there were no telephones, no electric lights, and young people in their middle twenties remember when automobiles were toys and the moving picture was an experiment just coming to commercial use. And much of the difference between the American of today and of Monroe's day is due to the physical discoveries that a hundred years have developed.

"These physical discoveries have changed men's creeds, revised men's attitude to God and man, rebuilt their institutions, made them braver because they could afford courage, made them kinder because they could afford kindness, and wiser because knowledge of life was forced upon them by the civilization in which they live."

HIS SAFETY DEPOSIT BOX

Banker Would Have Put Would-Be Borrower With His Other Business Securities.

The great banker looked keenly at the young man. "So you are temporarily embarrassed, eh?" he asked kindly.

"I am sorry to say I am," said the young man, emboldened by his manner.

"How much do you want?"

"Five hundred dollars would tide me over."

"And what security can you offer?"

"I can offer you," said the young man, impressively, "my own personal security."

The old man arose with a slow smile and raised the lid of an iron-bound chest which stood in a corner.

"Will you get in here, please?" he said.

"In there? Why?"

"Because," was the reply, "this is the place in which I always keep my securities."—Kansas City Star.

Steel Has Great Cutting Power.

"High-speed steel" for cutting tools has been well known for years, and an improved form of this material has been introduced in Sheffield, England. It is reported that this steel has four times the cutting power of any other in use. The composition is, it appears, still a secret, but it is said to be the first "high-speed steel" that can be hardened in cold water without danger. It can also be hardened with oil or in a cold blast.

Wools made of it wear out much less rapidly and require much less grinding than those of the older kinds of steel. They will also go on working at high temperature longer. But the makers themselves say that this steel does not by any means mark the final development of "high-speed steel."—Washington Star.

Help Austrian Children.

Danish joint committees for help to war devastated countries report that in 1921 Denmark entertained 5,584 children from Austria for several months, and that since September, 1919, Denmark has cared for 16,455 Austrian children and 5,428 German children. Furthermore, 120 German little ones needing special care were nursed in a special camp. Gifts of hospital equipment were sent to Austria and Germany, and 40,000 francs was spent supporting a children's home near Rheims. Food and clothing to the value of 70,000 Danish crowns were sent to Germany and Austria and financial assistance for children amounting to 25,000 crowns was sent to Belgium, 33,775 to Poland, and 34,500 to France.

Strike Not New Weapon.

That strikes are not of recent origin, but that they have, for many centuries, troubled the employer of labor, is said to be interestingly established by a record recently discovered in certain ancient Egyptian hieroglyphic tablets. These tablets were found in the excavation of some ruins at Thebes, about a strong light upon the labor conditions of the city 3,000 years ago. Details are given of many interesting phases of a strike when a large number of workmen notified their employer they would discontinue work unless their back pay were promptly given them and a new wage scale arranged.

Deleterious Imitation.

"Don't you sometimes lose faith in human nature?"

"Never," replied Senator Sorghum. "You can always depend on human nature for generous actions and unprejudiced opinions. That refers, of course, to genuine human nature, which isn't always so easy to find. A good many people feel that they have to depend on human artifice and dissimulation. Human nature, my friend, is all right. What makes the trouble in society is the de-natured human."

Brains.

World-famous Dr. George W. Crile, who operates as skillfully with one hand as the other, compares the human body to a dry cell, with liver the negative pole, brain the positive.

Anything that affects the liver will also affect the brain, says Crile. Indirectly, therefore, it appears that the intellect is partly in the liver. Sluggish liver frequently is the cause of stupidity. A course in calomel sometimes is worth more than a course in school.

WANTED GOSPELS BY MARK

Musky Cowboy Gives Up Life of Crime After Reading Tract Supplied by Bible Society.

One afternoon Rev. A. Wesley Mell, secretary of the Pacific agency of the American Bible society, was working alone in the San Francisco depository. Suddenly the door opened and a cowboy 6 feet 1 in height, with one eye gone (shot out in a drunken brawl), with sombrero and chaps and clanking spurs came toward him with outstretched hand. Mr. Mell thought at once that it was a hold-up. But the cowboy said to him, "I want some gospels by Mark." And he got them.

This cowboy, who had been riding the range for several months, had drawn his pay and come into San Francisco for a good time. One morning he awoke to find himself in one of the lowest rooming-houses in the worst section of the city. Every cent of his money was gone and he debated as to what he should do to raise sufficient funds to take him home. He finally decided that he would go out on the street and "stick somebody up."

As he lay in bed working out his plans he noticed a small maroon-covered book lying on the stand by the side of his bed. Not being in any special hurry to go out and perpetrate a hold-up, and out of pure curiosity, he picked up the book.

It was one of the recent Gospels of Mark, printed by the American Bible society, which are given by the thousands to mission workers.—American Bible Society.

HAS NO CINCH ON ALPHABET

Prairie Village Barber Replies to Demand of R. R. Company Not to Use Its Initials.

Some time ago the Canadian Pacific Railway company issued notices to certain hotels, restaurants, shops, etc., protesting against the unauthorized use of its initials. One Timothy O'Brien, proprietor of the "C. P. R. Barber Shop" in a prairie village, received the warning, and replied as follows:

"Dear Sir—I got your notice. I don't want no law suit with yure company. I no yure company owns most everything—railerodes, steamers, most of the best land and the time, but I don't know as you own the hole alphabet. The letters on my shop don't stand for yure railerode, but for somethin' better. I left a muther in Ireland, she is dead and gawn, but her memories are dear to me. Her maiden name was Christina Patricia Reardon, and what I want to no is what you are going to do about it. I suppose you won't argue that the balance of my sign what refers to cut rates has got anything to do with yure railerodes. There ain't been no cut rates round these parts that I nos of."—London Morning Post.

Green Diamonds in Africa.

Two discoveries of green diamonds have recently been reported from South Africa. The first, found in the Bloemhof district, was a 5 1/2 karat stone, black and opaque, which, on cutting, yielded a jewel of 1 1/2 karats of an emerald-green shade. It has been appraised by London experts at about \$5,000, or about 100 times the price of a water-white diamond, says the Engineering and Mining Journal-Press. The second green diamond was washed out at Parys, a short time ago, and was of ten karats weight. It has been sent to a government valuator at Cape Town. One of the most celebrated green diamonds is the " Dresden Green," in the Saxon Crown Jewels, which weighs about 40 karats and is apple-green in color.

Freak Memory of a German.

Herr Otto Schrader of Berlin is reputed to have the most marvelous memory in the world. The German Meteorological society tested it recently. "What was the weather the other day—say November 26, 1890?" the president of the society asked Schrader. Schrader never hesitated: "It was very clear before dawn," said Schrader. "In the afternoon it was cloudy, with snow flurries. The temperature was two or three degrees above freezing." And Schrader was right. The German scientists found out on checking up. Several American theatrical men are said to be after him to appear on the vaudeville stage in the United States this summer.

The Greatness of Peking.

Peking, the Chinese capital, about which the rival armies are now fighting, is in reality three cities in one. There is an inner or Manchu city, and an outer or Chinese city. The inner comprises the Imperial city, which, in turn, contains the "Forbidden City" or the "Purple Forbidden City" inside the walls of which, again, is the Imperial palace. Peking itself is one of the oldest cities in the world, being known to exist in the Twelfth century before Christ, but although it is of immense size, being 25 miles in circumference, much of the space within the walls is unoccupied.

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