



A Roumanian harvest scene

Farming in Roumania

A party of London gentlemen recently visited Roumania to report upon a scheme for the introduction of meat products from that country into Great Britain, and the following notes descriptive of the agricultural conditions prevailing there, will be of interest to *Canal* readers.

The country is a vast fertile plain of deep alluvial soil. It is almost entirely under maize and wheat, and, as yet, artificial manuring is unnecessary; but the Government, anticipating future deterioration, propose to make the rotation of crops compulsory. Already most of the large owners leave their land fallow every third year. The peasants cannot afford to do so, and, while they may be ultimately compelled to do so, the proprietors are already eager to adopt the English system of rotating crops.

Nine-tenths of the stock now in the country are practically useless for market purposes. The cattle are mostly rough old trek oxen, half-starved. The young cattle are left to forage for themselves, being neither sheltered nor fattened. The sheep (ewes only) are small and lean, but the mutton has a goaty flavor, but the lambs are more promising.

The pigs are mostly grown for fat, and very large; but there are many useful young animals from the native races crossed with Yorkshires and Berkshires.

In efforts made to improve the Roumanian sheep from a mutton point of view, the *tsiegaia* (native) ewe crossed with Southdown and Oxford Down rams have yielded good results. There are no wether sheep in the country.

Roumanian pigs are fat and large, running from 5 to 7 cwt. The great object is to secure fat, for lard, fat is worth more than lean in Roumania. From an English point of view cattle and sheep want grading up—pigs grading down.

There are some extensive farms in Roumania. One of them near Constantza, is a typical grain farm, 30 to 25 miles in length by 10 to 12 wide; 10,000 acres were owned and 10,000 rented. The estate employs 1,200 peasants as farm hands, who are paid by having the use of 10 to 15 acres each in return for their doing the work for a similar area. Each peasant earns about £30 per annum, and pays 5 fr. as poll tax—15 to 20 fr. per family on average; but as a rule they spend all their wages. Extra laborers are hired for about 2 fr. per day with food. They sleep where they

telephone with the city. Lambs, three months old, are valued at 5 francs, full mouthed ewes at 7 francs, trek oxen store 100 to 125 francs, the same fatted, 200 to 250 francs. A six-months old lamb weighed 63 lbs., when killed the meat was 31½ lbs. This animal was of the native breed.

ITEMS.

The lessee of an estate owned by the Government, of 6,000 acres paid 10s. per acre rent. Roumanians are very superstitious; they think it is unlucky to enlarge a house by building additional stories, so they increase it laterally. Many of the farm houses are, therefore, long and rambling, with labyrinths of passages.

It is unlucky to eat pigeons and rabbits, so these animals have a good time. There are no fences in the country.

If a farmer wants to separate fields, he does so by mounds of earth raised at the corners, and if he wishes to fence off his field from the road he digs holes by the roadside, so that trespassing vehicles would be upset.

One sees 1,000 acres of wheat in one field, consisting of six sections of 150 acres each.

In the villages the men take turns to act as constable, one week at a time. These village police are armed with a rifle and fixed bayonet, and look very fierce, but they are very forbearing to neighbors, as they re-



A Roumanian Peasant in sheep-skin costume, used winter and summer