

A YOUNG NATION *and* an ANCIENT PEOPLE

Claiming Descent from Roman Colonists, this Balkan People Groaned under the Turkish Yoke for 400 Years, became Independent, Suffered Much in the World War, and Emerged with Added Territory

RUMANIA (*ru-mä'nî-ä*). If we compare the present condition of this Balkan kingdom with its condition before the World War, we find that Rumania has almost doubled its size and population, with 122,000 square miles of territory and about 17,400,000 people.

This region, just north of the lower Danube, was the Roman province of Dacia under the Emperor Trajan, and its present inhabitants claim descent from Roman colonists of that time, and regard their land as "an outpost of Latin culture set in the East." In appearance and language the Rumanians are like the Italians, though with much Slavic admixture.

At the end of about 400 years of Turkish rule, during which there were costly struggles also with Poland, Hungary, and Russia, the Treaty of Paris (1856) recognized the two provinces, Moldavia and Wallachia, which lay between the Carpathian Mountains and the Black Sea, as "autonomous" (self-governing) parts of the Turkish Empire.

Their coalition in 1862 formed the new nation Rumania (or Roumania), to which a German (Hohenzollern) king was given in 1866. In 1878 complete independence was achieved. In the second Balkan War (1913) Rumania aided Serbia, Greece, and Montenegro against Bulgaria, and was rewarded by a slight extension southward of the district on the Black Sea known as the Dobrudja.

Ravaged in the World War

In the World War of 1914-18 Rumania disappointed German hopes by siding with the Entente Allies. As a result it was terribly ravaged by a German-Austrian-Bulgarian army in 1916 and forced to sign a humiliating peace. But when the Central Powers were finally defeated, the Treaty of Versailles (1919) rewarded Rumania by giving her the former Hungarian territory of Transylvania (west of the Carpathians), the former Austrian district of Bukovina (on the north), and Bessarabia (across the river Pruth to the east), which had been a part of Russia. In Transylvania especially, the Rumanians form a decided majority of the

population, and this reunion with the parent land gratified a strong nationalist sentiment among its inhabitants. (For map, see Balkan Peninsula.)

More than 80 per cent. of the population are engaged in agriculture. The rich, deep soil of the Danubian plain makes Rumania one of the great wheat- and corn-growing centres of the world. Other important crops are beans, potatoes, sugar beets, and tobacco. The hill region between the plain and the mountains is well adapted to fruit growing, and Rumania is noted for its red and white wines and its plum brandy.

The forests which clothe the slopes of the towering Transylvanian Alps (part of the Carpathian system) furnish abundant timber, and the mineral resources—rock-salt, coal, marble, petroleum, etc.—are very great. The Rumanian oil-fields, among the most important in Europe, and one of the chief resources of the kingdom, were badly damaged during the World War.

For three months of the winter the Danube, Rumania's chief artery of commerce, lies ice-locked. The summers are tropically hot. Water buffaloes and slow-moving oxen are the chief

draught animals. The extensive railway system is owned by the State. At Cernavoda, a great bridge 12½ miles long crosses the Danube and its wide marshes, carrying trains from the capital Bucharest across "the stony region" (*Dobrudja*) which separates Rumania proper from its chief Black Sea port, Constantza.

Transylvania Rich and Fair

To the west of the Transylvanian Alps lies the rich and picturesque upland region of high mountains and valleys called Transylvania, now redeemed from Magyar (Hungarian) rule. About a fourth of the land is used for agriculture—rye, wheat, oats, and potatoes being the chief crops; fruit raising is extensive; and there are vast pastures for sheep, cattle, and horses. Forests of coniferous trees, beeches, oaks, etc., clothe the mountains and comprise nearly two-fifths of the total area. Transylvania also is rich in

A RUMANIAN BRIDE



How picturesque she looks, this dainty little Rumanian peasant girl in her bridal dress! With a mirror before her, she is decorating her dark hair with a wreath of flowers.