

TWENTY YEARS IN ROUMANIA

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649136094

Twenty years in Roumania by Maude Parkinson

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MAUDE PARKINSON

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IN ROUMANIA**

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BY

MAUDE PARKINSON

UNIV. OF
CALIFORNIA



LONDON: GEORGE ALLEN & UNWIN, LTD.
RUSKIN HOUSE, 40 MUSEUM STREET, W.C. 1

DR 209

P35

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First published in 1921



PREFACE

NOW that I have set down in black and white these random impressions and recollections of a country in which I spent many of the happiest years of my life, a slight feeling of doubt assails me. Might my Roumanian friends possibly find cause for offence in the freedom which I have allowed myself? Then I remember that they have a sense of humour, and the doubt vanishes.

If I deal frankly with some of the methods and customs of the country, it is because I hope to give English readers an insight into the character of the people, and enable them to find there, as I have found, a very great deal to love.

When, after my long absence from England, I compare our own methods and ways of thought with those which have become so familiar to me in Roumania, the latter do not always suffer in the comparison. Indeed, if I wrote about some of the things which have especially struck me since my return, I might arouse a good deal of resentment.

Some of the best friends I have in the world are Roumanians. The kindness and sympathy they showed me during a time of great sorrow in my life must be an enduring memory. Rather than be suspected of repaying such kindness by holding up my friends to ridicule, I would tear up these pages

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which I—a tyro in the art of letters—have written with so much labour, but also, I must add, with so much pleasure.

After completing my education in Germany, I spent some time very happily in Vienna with friends who were well acquainted with Roumania.

I became fascinated by their descriptions of life in a country which for me had something of the glamour of the Orient, and so, armed with letters of introduction, I proceeded to Bucarest and soon established myself as a teacher of languages. For the twenty-two following years of my life I lived in Roumania; but for the war I should probably be there now.

My relations with my pupils, members of the best-known families in the country, were always of the pleasantest, and as Roumanians have a natural aptitude for languages, there was no drudgery in the teaching.

Since I left the country Roumania has come through a time of terrible trial.

My heart has often been wrung by the accounts of the sufferings of my friends; but even during the darkest days of the war I was sustained by the knowledge that they never once lost courage. They displayed a spirit as indomitable as our own, and now I rejoice that their fiery trial is over, and that the dawn of a glorious day has arrived.

MAUDE REA PARKINSON.

ARMAGH, 1921.

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