

....

My curiosity grew and I approached the singing piper. Here, the saddest sight showed itself to me: a child of 6 to 7 years, dressed only in a shirt made of thick fabric, old and unwashed, torn, short; over it wearing a small fleece, gnawed in several places; his feet empty, his head uncovered; only a strip of girdle went around his waist, without trousers and nothing else around him; he sat there with his knees tight and close to a small fire, almost completely put out, his face blue, as his hands could no longer be of use (it was November the 26th), not a sign of nourishment could be seen.

- What is this small child doing here? I shouted horrified.
- He guards the cattle as they feed on the hay, sir.
- To whom you belong, child?
- To my father Stan, he answered me, trembling from the cold.
- Why do you treat this child so badly, endangering his life? I asked the peasants who were accompanying me.
- It's nothing, sir, they replied, we all grew up like this when we were like him, and we became strong.
- Who helps him feed the cattle?
- His father comes in the morning and evening.
- Where is he now?
- In the village, sir, tending around the house.
- Why not keep the cattle at home, in an enclosure? They would fare better, and the child can go to school.
- That is how we got accustomed, sir.
- But the cattle won't make it through winter in good health.
- What can we do, sir? The that cattle makes it without frostbites is ours, the one that doesn't, dies, we can't do anything about it.

.....

Iancu Petrescu, census agent of Lovișteea county – Argeș district, 1859