

Task 29

You are going to read the first part of a magazine article about the European peasant. Parts of some sentences have been removed from the text. Choose the most suitable part from the list (A-K) for each gap (1-8) in the text. There are two extra parts that you do not need to use. Write your answers in the boxes after the text. There is an example at the beginning (0).

Flocking to the future

The European peasant is becoming as rare as the wolf, says
Tim Salmon

Twenty years ago it was a six-hour walk from the village of Tidhendro to the nearest point accessible to a vehicle. Its only "road" was the mule trail. Up in the heart of the Pindos mountains in Greece (0) _____, water had to be fetched from an ice-cold spring, and the family slept on the floor, (1) _____ that the women had woven.

One winter morning I woke there to a clear-blue sky. The mountains shone with snow. Sweet-smelling wood smoke rose from the chimneys. There was no sound but the occasional voice or the ring of an axe. I thought it was idyllic.

But the reality was (2) _____, not a level patch of ground on which to grow a worthwhile crop, and no doctor or secondary school closer than a day's journey. The much-depleted population was elderly or infirm. Those with get-up-and-go had done just that – to the cities or abroad. With them had gone the will (3) _____ that for centuries had made life bearable in such harsh places.

All over the Alps, Pyrenees, Alpujarras and Abruzzi you see that valley after precipitous valley, (4) _____, has been abandoned. Even in the heyday of these

communities, poverty drove people to emigration or seasonal work as pedlars or stonemasons in the lowlands. As early as 1814 men were leaving the valley of the Ubaye in the French Alps (5) _____.

People exclaim at the beauty of the valley, Emilie Carles observes in her book, *A Wild Herb Soup*. But, she says: "Before the 1914-18 war, nobody cared about beauty. It was (6) _____. Life for the peasants was extremely difficult... For six months the cold and the snow paralysed everything."

The traditional rural economy has been superseded by the skiing industry, often to the detriment of the landscape. There have been demographic changes, too. Outsiders have bought much of the housing stock for holiday homes, (7) _____. Another "new" population, especially in the attractive southern mountains, are the *néo-ruraux* – the new peasantry, the post-1968 drop-outs and *refuseniks* from urban consumer life, (8) _____, in conflict with the locals, who favour "progress". And there are people who "come home" after one or two generations in the city to run a hotel or set up as tele-workers in their native village.

Taken from the Internet

- A who are often militant supporters of "traditional ways"
- B where the soil has been laboriously husbanded into tiny terraces by generations of peasant farmers
- C wrapped in shaggy wool blankets
- D to maintain the community life
- E that there was no work
- F peasants always found time to admire their land
- G to seek their fortunes in Mexico
- H there was no electricity
- I the harshest country in the world
- J what they had always hoped for
- K which they occupy for a fraction of the year