

organization, or at the best fettered by obsolete institutions. Our politicians, it would seem, thought to attain Western civilization at a bound. But the pace was too rapid: the result was merely a veneer, thinly laid over the surface of national life. The most liberal institutions of the West were adopted without taking the general social condition of the country into consideration. A backward institution must of necessity follow the growing spirit of a community: a premature institution cannot possibly help a country to skip whole stages of natural development. It was as though a child were dressed in the clothes of a grown person and called a 'man'.

The bulk of the population, being completely illiterate, could not realize the rights and duties imposed by the new organization. They had to rely for enlightenment upon the upper classes, and these did not fail to let the peasant know his duties, though conveniently omitting to explain his rights. As the democratic Rumanian constitution abolished all titles of nobility, that harmless sop to the vanity of an immature society, the upper classes strove to secure posts in the new polity. They usually had neither interest in nor aptitude for these posts, which were generally obtained through bribery. The political field absorbed in this way all the greater land-owners, who formed the upper classes in Rumania, and they leased their lands to the best paying tenant. Rumanian leases as a rule are short (five to ten years), and the tenant has therefore no interest in introducing costly improvements into the existing archaic methods of agriculture.

Neither owner nor tenant has time to think of the peasant, nor can the latter do anything for himself, as he has no direct vote. Fifty of them send one delegate, having one vote, to the election which takes place in the