

The Liberals, who include the majority of the big land-owners, are the real supporters of Conservative ideas. But the views held by a party upon a certain question often suffer fundamental changes when passing from opposition to power; and that such a thing should happen without the daily activities of the country being in the least affected clearly shows the hollowness of Rumanian politics. The officials are the class chiefly interested in politics, and the only change likely to affect them is the passing from opposition to power, or vice versa. A Rumanian political party has only one aspiration: to rule, and to rule alone. It may be mentioned as characteristic of the psychology of our parties that in 1888, after the defection of the Cabinet led by M. Carp, one of our ablest statesmen, and, what is more, one of the few who never bargained with his principles, only a small minority remained faithful to him, the majority of the Conservatives choosing as their leader G. Cantacuzino, whose only qualification was that of being the biggest landowner in Rumania.

This may explain, perhaps, how it is possible that, though much progress has been made, nothing has been done for the peasantry, four-fifths of the population of Rumania existing under conditions little different from those of the Daco-Romans. Mighty palaces have been built, but nothing has been done towards providing work for the peasant during the long winter months when he has nothing to do and less to eat.

Absorbed to some extent by the introduction of various reforms and largely by party disputes, the politicians were not able to devote themselves to shaping the national ideal. That Rumanians under foreign domination have maintained their nationality is due to purely intrinsic causes.