PARLIAMENTARY GOVERNMENT IN CHILE

PAUL S. REINSCH

In the public life of modern states, political and economic motives of action are so closely interwoven that the student of politics rarely encounters a situation or institution in which he can trace and study purely political principles. Indeed, the struggle for political power and for recognized authority, the effort to give the stamp of public sanction to this or that policy, is always the focus of public life; but the action of the participants in the political drama is determined largely by non-political motives. We have to go back to the Athenean republic or to the Whig rule in eighteenth century England to see the political factor in its clearest and most detached manifestations. It is there that we see a society highly capable and cultivated, concentrating all its attention upon that dramatic struggle for power, that attempt to gain leadership over other men by ascendancy in counsel, which form the true essence of politics. Among modern nations, with their democratic organization, with vast material interests clamoring for attention, purely political considerations are apt to be overshadowed by those of economic and social import, although it always remains interesting to compare and measure nations with regard to their ability to express and deal with the principles of their life in the forms and activities of political counsel.

The public life of Chile offers a most fascinating field to the student of political science, because here he will encounter conditions of society and of political action not unlike those of the most interesting periods of political history. Chile would seem to be *par excellence* the political country of South America, and it is not too much to say that perhaps no other country in the world exhibits the action and interaction of political motives and principles in so pure and interesting a manner than does the Chilian Republic of our own day. With the England of the eighteenth century Chile has much in common. Here, too, an aristocracy of birth and wealth has unquestioned con-

trol of social and political life. It is an aristocracy mainly of landholders. The ruling families possess their large estates and attractive country-seats in the central region of Chile; they have their town houses in Santiago where, during the season, they enjoy the pleasurable excitements of social and political life. The mass of the population is composed of ignorant laborers, peasant tenants on the large estates, cow-boys and miners. The middle class is of relatively small importance in Chile as a manufacturing industry and population has not as yet been developed. The learned professions, however, have always exercised a considerable influence and have attracted mem bers of the most aristocratic families. It is not surprising that the manner of life of the wealthy classes in Chile produces a peculiarly attractive type of men and women. Out of door activities and direct interest in the primordial enterprise of mankind, agriculture, pursued according to modern methods and on a large scale, give the Chilians a zest for life, a healthy outlook, combined with the unmistakable dignity of men born to direct and to command. If they have any weakness, it does not consist in a lack of the ambition to excel in active pursuits nor in a disinclination to make vigorous efforts to succeed, but perhaps in a certain impatience with painstaking and laborious methods and in a want of experience with more complicated and more efficient forms of economic organization. The sons and daughters of these families are given the training which befits their station. They are early taught to be interested in the active enterprises of their house and thus carry the impress of definiteness of purpose and of breadth of outlook, not always encountered in the scions of the wealthy.

This society constitutes at the present time the only aristocracy in the world which still has full and acknowledged control of the economic, political and social forces of the state in which they live. These men are the owners of the great *haciendas;* important industrial enterprises in mining and irrigation bear their names. These same names are also borne by the excellent Chilian wines which are set before the guests at hotel tables and banquets and which recall those of Italy and of France in the variety and excellence of their bouquet. When you enter the halls of congress and look down upon the senators or the deputies, the names of Concha, Figueroa, Subercaseaux, Tocornal,

Errázuriz, Vergara, Zañartu, Irarrázaval, Edwards, Balmaceda, Walker, etc., will again be repeated to you. They, too, are the stars in the firmament of Chilian social life. These families have their representatives in literature, in the plastic and pictorial arts, in the learned professions. They form a society which recalls in all its aspects the English society of the eighteenth century; a group of families small enough so that all the members are personally acquainted and may give each other that constant training which is the result only of social intercourse on a high plane. The intimacy of this society is enhanced, in the eyes of the stranger, by the fact that its members generally address each other by the first name. It will be Don Alexandro, Don Ramon, Don Joaquin, etc. Nor is this a fictitious intimacy; on the contrary, it is founded upon lifelong acquaintance. The most interesting and important characteristic of Chilian society is its political self-consciousness. It is governing the country, under endless irritation and conflicts to be sure, but it is supreme. Of its main political purposes in international and national affairs, it is quite certain. Though split up into numerous parties, which carry on a lively political warfare, its solidarity as a society nevertheless comes out again and again at times of political crises.

Were we, on the basis of political experience, *a priori* to construct institutions for a society and state such as those of Chile, we should certainly be led to apply the precedents of eighteenth century England and to say that government by discussion would play an important rôle, would in fact be most natural and appropriate to such a situation; and so the student of politics will not be surprised, although from the point of view of the exactness of his science, he will be gratified, by finding that Chile is as a matter of fact a parliamentary country *par excellence*. It is the only country in the new world which has the cabinet system of government; parliamentary government exists here in its most extreme form, as the executive is not given the power of dissolving the popular chamber. The Chilian parliament is the council of a governing class where men who, with all their differences of opinion, respect each other, meet and discuss their common interests with dignity and ability. Here it is possible for the investigator to observe a community engaged in almost purely political controversy, a community in which political discussion always holds the

center of the stage. Even the life of the two principal clubs of Santiago is chiefly political. To their attractive rooms and gardens the members of congress adjourn after the daily sessions, and it is there that policies are intimately discussed and important political arrangements are made.

The two chambers of the Chilian congress are comparatively small. The senate has thirty-one members, not counting the ministers; the house ninety-two. The ministers of state are as a rule selected from among the members of either house; but even if not entitled to membership, they may at any time attend the sessions and speak in either branch. The senate is a small council in which discussion is carried on more after the manner of a conference. In the chamber of deputies too there is little set speechmaking. As in the congress of Argentina, members address the house from their seats without rising. This has the effect of giving a certain informality to the proceedings. The members seem far more at ease than they would be were they harangued from a tribune. The debates are remarkably free from pompous declamation. They are natural and direct discussions of political affairs pitched in a conversational but dignified tone. At times of course, conversation becomes general, there are cross-questions and skirmishes, which produce a certain confusion and some loss of time. But decorum is always maintained and scenes of violence do not occur If a great part of the debates is taken up with partisan fencing for position, that is a characteristic which the Chilian parliament shares with others. An acquaintance with the Chilian parliament, even if only temporary, is a most valuable and interesting experience to a student of comparative politics.

Chilian party arrangements are excessively intricate and in order to enter into a certain understanding of them, it is necessary to take a glance at the development of Chilian political life during the last sixty years. The very first impression which the study of Chilian political history conveys is that of the stability of Chilian society. The same names which we encounter in prominent places in contemporary social and political affairs we find affixed to the constitutions of Chile. They are borne by the incumbents of the presidency and other important offices, by generals and by intellectual leaders for the past century. Some names have disappeared, others have taken

their places, but the current has remained the same. It is interesting to encounter English names like Edwards, MacIver, Walker, Cox, Meeks, but so great is the assimilating power of Chilian society and nationality that most of the bearers of these names, if they should perchance speak the English language, will speak it as a tongue acquired abroad; their language is Spanish, their nationality Chilian. Among all South American nations, the Chilian has the greatest assimilating power.

The turning point in modern Chilian history is the Balmaceda Revolution of 1891. Before this the succession of presidents had been maintained since Independence without any interruption or curtailment of their terms through violence. The constitution of 1833 had based the government upon a firm conservative foundation. The power of the executive was strongly intrenched; the instruments of authority were in its hands, and political rights were not broadly conceded. It was an era of narrow oligarchic government, narrow in the extent of the participating elements of society, though generally statesmanlike it its management of public affairs. The two great names of Portales and Montt stand for the establishment of political authority in Chile upon a basis difficult to be shaken. Yet liberal currents of political thought were gradually making themselves felt and with the administrations of Perez and Errázuriz (1876–1881), a beginning was made in efforts to expand political life by granting political rights to wider circles and also to modify some of the most conservative practices and institutions of government. Presidential influence was scaled down by establishing the rule that a president should not be reëligible during a full term of five years after his first incumbency. The suffrage was extended, and by the introduction of the cumulative vote, minorities were given representation. The election of the senate was based upon popular vote and thus assimilated to that of the chamber of deputies. A struggle was also begun against the extreme and exclusive rights of the state church. Nonconformist services were permitted, though under restrictions, cemeteries were placed under lay administration, civil marriage was instituted, and the ecclesiastical courts, before which clerics had hitherto been tried, were abolished. With this growth of liberalism, public opinion was strengthened and assumed a broader sweep. It was no

longer the wealth and intelligence of the Santiago neighborhood, but the nation in a broader sense that entered into political life. These new forces of political authority found their readiest expression, of course, through parliament, and thereby strengthened parliamentary institutions. From the first, under the constitution of 1833, the parliamentary system had been instituted, inasmuch as ministers were permitted to be members of parliament, and to speak therein even if not members. It was inevitable that there should occur a struggle between the old institution of public authority, the presidency, and the newer forces of parliamentary life. This struggle came about during the term of President Balmaceda. It arose suddenly and was brought to a rapid and complete determination.

José Manuel Balmaceda had developed into a political leader of great ability and strength. Before coming to the presidency, he was recognized as the unquestioned leader of the liberal groups. His predecessor in the presidency, Santa María, had made extensive use of his influence and patronage in order to assure the election of Balmaceda. A large part of the liberal leaders were by this time becoming intensely dissatisfied with presidential interference in elections. To be sure, from the beginning of the republic it had been customary for the government to exercise a very strong influence in the selection of deputies and senators. The president governed with a congress which he had himself largely elected. This was especially true during the decennial presidential periods that preceded the legislation under President Perez, already referred to. While Chilian political society had endured interference in congressional legislation, it had usually insisted upon having a word to say in the selection of the president himself. The successful attempt of Santa María to control this election had, therefore, caused ill-feeling, although the particular candidate in this case happened to be very popular. The administration of President Balmaceda was characterized by great activity in developing the resources and public services of the country. But scarcely one-half of his term had passed when it became apparent that there was a serious want of understanding between him and numerous members of the liberal groups. When early in 1889 Balmaceda openly favored the candidacy of one of his followers for the presidency, the ill-will of congress was no longer concealed and a breach between the

president and parliament was imminent. In October, the liberal groups forced the appointment of a parliamentary ministry through an absolute refusal to coöperate with the president unless the cabinet were representative of parliament. In January, 1890, the president dismissed the parliamentary ministry and displaced it by one composed of his own followers. He maintained that it was his constitutional right to select his ministers according to his own views of policy and expediency. His course of action was severely censured by parliament and in June the discussion of the budget was adjourned in both houses on the ground that no appropriations would be made until the president had appointed a ministry in consonance with parliamentary opinion. Balmaceda yielded for a time, and in August appointed the Prats ministry, which he, however, dismissed again in October. While he seemed to believe thoroughly in his constitutional right to carry on the government with a ministry selected by himself, his course of action during this time was certainly vacillating and he at times gave assurances which were not lived up to in his subsequent action. His relation to the parliament was much like that of Charles I. The president now appointed a cabinet of his personal followers which had no influence with parliament. Congress obstinately refusing to pass the budget, the president declared the sessions of both houses closed. The provision of the constitution that only in virtue of a law there can be fixed annually the expenses of the administration and of the maintenance of the forces on land and sea, the president interpreted as imposing a duty upon parliament. The duty not having been performed, he declared that he was forced to govern the country, without parliamentary sanction of the appropriations contained in the budget, by direct exercise of his presidential power.

All the parties in parliament were united in their resistance to the position of the president. Special directories were appointed by the Liberal Alliance and by the Conservative party. All rivalries and enmities between these parties were buried and they coöperated loyally in the cause of upholding the constitutional powers of parliament. Financial support was liberally accorded by the wealthy members of the parties, and the newspapers were almost unanimous in supporting the cause of parliament until they were silenced by

police action. On January 1, 1891, the associated senators and deputies signed a solemn act of deposition, in which they recited the illegal and unconstitutional acts of the president. by reason of which he was held to have forfeited his constitutional authority. In the hostilities which followed, the congressional party was uniformly successful and Balmaceda paid the price of his single-handed poliey with the loss of all his power. After writing a testament in which he urged his friends and followers to uphold in the future the policy of presidential authority against congressional encroachments, he committed suicide. This act invested his character in the eyes of the people with a halo of martyrdom and caused the great bitterness of the struggle to give way to more tender feelings. It was therefore possible, surprising as it may seem after such a struggle, for the followers of Balmaceda to regain a position of great influence in Chilian politics within two or three years.

The success of the parliamentary party in this great constitutional struggle was held to have settled two points absolutely and forever. Hereafter there should be no executive interference with the liberty of election. That political function should be entirely dissociated from the activities of the central administration and the electorate should be allowed freely to express its choice. The other principle was that no president should attempt to govern without a cabinet which expressed the will of the majority in the chamber of deputies. Thus the interpretation which the parliamentary party had placed upon the constitution had been affirmed through trial by battle. No formal change was made in the constitution, but it was understood by everybody that hereafter a president should not be able to govern without submitting to the public will as expressed by parliament. The cabinet system, being introduced in this manner, received a most radical form in that the executive was not accorded the power of appealing to the country through a dissolution of parliament. In addition to these principles, legislation was established by which the communes were given self-government. They have the power of taxation and of providing for their local needs. As a matter of fact, this law did not, however, put an end to the reliance which the communes place in the central treasury, the horn of plenty from which flow all good things in Chilian politics. The law of municipalities also provided that

the national elections should be supervised by the communal authorities.

The principles contended for in the Balmaceda revolution were indeed of great enough importance to justify a struggle of such magnitude. It was an indication of the political ability and clear-sightedness of Chilian political society that they should have taken ground so decidedly and so promptly when these issues were presented. The coöperation of all parties during this crisis is a proof of that underlying solidarity of the governing class in Chile which, though hidden from sight by the everyday rivalries and party struggles, will manifest itself in times when great issues are to the fore.

But though a great constitutional question had been decided, nevertheless the political millenium did not begin for Chile with the settlement of the Balmaceda dispute. Elections were indeed freed from administrative intrigue at least for a time, but the control over the electorate exercised in that manner was displaced in many cases by the use of money. Upon the prevalence of corruption in present electoral politics, all Chilian writers seem to be agreed. One of them puts the average cost of a senatorship at 100,000 pesos and of a seat in the house of deputies at 10,000. In its convention of 1907, the Liberal party discussed at length, and bewailed, the corrupt practices of Chilian politics and pronounced itself in favor of a law limiting the election expenses of a senator to 10,000 and of a deputy to 5000 pesos. Chilian writers claim that on account of these materialistic influences the quality of membership in parliament has notably deteriorated since the golden days of authority when members were carefully selected by a providential executive. But even in the face of these discouraging facts, it must be set down as a decided gain to have established the principle that elections should be real, that votes should be actually counted, and that the executive should not use his patronage and influence for the purpose of predetermining results. Attempts in the latter direction have indeed not been entirely absent of late; in Chile, as elsewhere reforms are not self-sustaining, but need the constant support and watchfulness of public-spirited men. However, official interference, if it does exist, does not proceed from the head of the state, but from other high officials, in isolated cases. If the Chilian people will adhere to the idea of a free election and insist upon

respecting this institution as a true source of political authority, they will surely be able to work out a solution of the problem of corruption by which other nations, too, are confronted.

The municipal law also has not been entirely satisfactory. It has not been possible to create real communal life, and the localities still rely upon assistance from the central government. As a Chilian deputy has put it, "We have an immensely, exceptionally rich treasury, and a people frightfully poor. In this country, everything is disorganized, save the exploitation of the treasury for private ends."[1] While this statement puts the case rather strongly, it is, nevertheless, necessary in any discussion of Chilian politics to remember that the bulk of the national revenue ($20,000,000) comes from the export tax upon nitrate which falls upon a foreign industry. Local direct taxes would not be popular, and as a result the communes continue to rely upon assistance from without. This is the source of one of the greatest difficulties in Chilian politics, as it involves a constant pressure brought to bear by individual deputies upon the administration in order to secure grants for local purposes.

Of all of the reforms of 1891, it is the abiding effect of the establishment of the cabinet form of government that we are most closely concerned with in this paper. In order to get a complete view of the situation it will first be necessary to take a glance at the different Chilian parties. There are six parties of recognized standing in the Chilian parliament; to give them in their order of appearance in national life, they are the conservative, the liberal, the nationalist, the radical, the democratic, and the liberal democratic.

We might in a preliminary way briefly characterize these parties as follows: The conservative is clerical in its policies: the liberal and the radical are secular and progressive, the latter being almost anticlerical. The democratic party, small in its congressional representation, stands for the interests of the laboring classes. Finally the national and the liberal democratic parties are personal in their traditions, the former representing what is called Monttvarism, or the authoritarian traditions of the régime of Montt and Varas (1851–1861), while the latter has fallen heir to the personal policies of President Balmaceda and is, therefore, known also at the Balmacedist party. The conservative and the liberal parties go back

to the beginning of republican government. During the first era, however, the conservative party was in absolute control. In the political slang of Chile, the conservatives were known as the *Pelucones* or big-wigs, while the liberals were known as *Pipiolos*, a nickname of uncertain derivation. In the battle of Lircai (1830), the liberal elements were defeated, and the conservatives, who comprised the majority of the old landed families of Chile, were thus enabled to establish the government according to their ideas, as they did in the constitution of 1833. This notable document, in the creation of which Portales was most active and influential, formed a consistent and solid basis for an authoritative government with a strong executive and ample instruments of power. Under the presidency of Manuel Montt (1851–1861), the conservative and authoritarian régime came to its head and traditions were established during this period through which the maintenance of law and order in Chile will be assured for a long time to come. But the older conservatives were too narrow in their views to continue in an adequate leadership of a new, vigorous, and progressive community. Influence passed to the liberal groups, during the presidency of Perez, and soon the conservative party was reduced definitively to the position of a minority. Through their action in the parliamentary struggle in 1891, the conservatives regained influence and power; in fact, they were quite the dominating element in the state during the first two administrations after the revolution, those of Jorje Montt and Federico Errázuriz E. (1891–1901). Public administation under Errázuriz was, however, not of such a nature to commend itself to the Chilian people; the conservatives were, therefore, again reduced to a strictly minority position. On account of the confusion existing in Chilian party life, however, they have been able always to exercise some influence upon the government. The conservative party is *par excellence* clerical. In the words of Senator Vincente Reyes, an opponent, "The conservative party tries solely to serve the ecclesiastical interest. It desires to establish the hegemony of the church over all other institutions." The party therefore draws a great part of its strength from the following which clerical support secures to it among the masses of the population. The conservative party, as a minority, has supported the following policies, among others: the liberty of instruction, propor-

tional representation, communal independence, and the law of parliamentary incompatibilities. It is not difficult to understand the reasons for which a minority would favor these policies. The question of educational policy is extremely complicated in Chile. Under the liberal régime a beginning was made in the creation of a system of public instruction under the control of laymen. This has always been resisted by the conservative party, which does not desire to have the state build up a system of education which is not dependent upon the church. According to the legislation of Chile, no higher degrees are recognized in state appointments except those which are granted by the national university and national secondary schools. Liberty of instruction, in the sense of the conservative party, accordingly stands for the demand that degrees granted by the ecclesiastical institutions of learning should be placed upon the same footing and given the same legal value as those obtained in the state institutions. The conservations are also not favorably disposed toward an extension of the system of public primary schools. The conservative party at the present time numbers among its members about one-third of the senators and one-fourth of the deputies.

As already stated, the liberal party, which occupied but a modest place in the public affairs of the earlier era, came to its own under the administration of the first President Errázuriz (1871–1876). This statesman in fact based his policies upon a liberal-radical alliance, which entirely displaced conservative influence. Liberal reforms continued to be introduced during the following three administrations and liberalism seemed to be at the height of its influence, with no clouds on the horizon, when the administration of Balmaceda began. The policies of that president, however, shook the solidity of the party to such an extent that it has not as yet recovered its cohesion. The liberal party of Chile has suffered the fate which has overcome the group bearing that name in many other countries. Its principles, indeed, are such as appeal to high-minded and statesmanlike men, yet the party fails in some of the lesser arts of politics, and moreover, its principles are often not brought into a vital relation with the interests and energies of national life. It will always inspire respect but will not always command an irresistible following. At the present time the liberal party itself is the third in rank in the Chilian

parliament, considering membership, and it is in absolute need of the support of the other liberal groups, the radical party and the liberal democratic party, in order to realize any of its political aims.

The national party has a rather unique history. It was originally composed of the personal followers of Don Manuel Montt (president, 1851–1861). A group of politicians, bound to this statesman through interest and through admiration of his efficient wielding of the instruments of authority, united itself in the spirit of a personal following and adopted the name of nationalist party. It is, however, more commonly known as the Monttvarista party, a name made up of that of President Montt and of his famous prime minister, Varas. The strong-handed maintenance of its authority by this administration did not result in a harvest of great popularity for the nationalist party. It, however, maintained itself as an opportunist and personal party through the many vicissitudes of the latter half of the nineteenth century and finally came to its own again when one of its members, Don Pedro Montt, son of the president, received the support of other groups and was elected to the presidency in 1906. This final success has given new life and impetus to the nationalist party, although it has apparently not as yet become endowed with very definite principles of action, outside of loyalty to the leadership and belief in the political capacity of the Montts.

The radical party originated at a time when the liberals were making coalition arrangements with the conservative party before they felt sure of the ground under their feet. As its name rightly indicates, it stands for the same tendencies in political life that were represented by the British and French radicals in the nineteenth century. A strong belief in the democratic form of government, in public education, and in freedom from ecclesiastical tutelage compose the chief elements in its political belief. In its party organization, it has constituted itself upon a popular basis. The unit of organization is the assembly or meeting of all the party members in a certain department. The candidates of the party are nominated by this assembly, which also elects the central junta or directorate. This organization has since been adopted by some of the other Chilian parties. Under the first Errázuriz, the radicals, as already stated, formed an alliance with the liberal party, which formed the basis of government and

resulted in the election of the next president, Don Aníbal Pinto (1876–1881). Though never a majority party, it has, nevertheless, taken part in a number of important administrations, such as that of Errázuriz the first, of Pinto, Jorje Montt and Riesco. The programme adopted in its general convention of 1906 contains among many other the following principles and suggestions from which the present tendencies of the party may be seen: The party favors the election of the president of the republic by direct vote of the people (he being at present elected through a college); the restriction of parliamentary incompatibilities; the payment of the members of parliament (their service now being gratuitous); the modification of the constitution of the senate so as to convert it into a chamber of revision and control, elected in a different manner from the second, the political, chamber; the organization of the electoral power as an independent institution, detached from the municipalities; the separation of church and state; gratuitous primary education, obligatory and administered by laymen; diminution of the number of festival days, etc.

The democratic party has organized itself for the purpose of representing the interests of the laboring classes. As, however, there is no large factory population in the Chilian cities, the party does not as yet possess a strong constituency. In the present parliament, it disposes of only three deputies. The laboring population in the rural districts is too apathetic and ignorant to take very much interest in government. It allows itself readily to be led by its employers and does not form an element of independent importance in political life. The rural population has not been reached as yet by democratic or socialistic agitation.

The most unique party in Chilian public life is that which is officially called the liberal democratic but which popularly goes by the name of Balmacedist. The followers of Balmaceda, during his administration, comprise many men who had great experience in practical politics as public officials and as manipulators of elections. During the storm of the revolution, these elements which had composed the administration were driven from power and mastery; but when peace had again settled upon the land, it was not long before they attempted to regain their ascendancy. In the testament of Balmaceda they were provided with a party programme. In his character they saw

a personality of leadership, loyalty to whom would hold them together by a more than theoretical bond. Beginning with the election of 1894, the liberal democratic party has played a very important part in Chilian parliamentary life. Its position is a somewhat anomalous one. The political testament of Balmaceda enjoins upon his followers the duty of vindicating the powers of the president of the republic and of protecting that office against encroachments upon the part of parliament. Being, however, a minority party, his followers could not put into application these policies from the ground of vantage of a complete political control. They therefore aspired to acquire influence in parliament, and after gaining a foothold there, attempted to influence the administration much as any other party would do. On account of this course of action they have been charged with gross inconsistency. In attempting to fortify their parliamentary position and bring influence to bear upon the executive they have, so their opponents urge, gone directly counter to the mandates of the political testament which they pretend to revere. But they defend themselves by asserting that the only manner in which they can achieve the power necessary to carry out their policies is by gradually working themselves into the control of parliament. That control once achieved, they can then rearrange constitutional relations so as to carry out the principles of their departed leader. Meanwhile the party has been pursuing a policy of strict opportunism, making the most of its representation, ready to conclude compacts with any other group or faction whenever its own power and influence will be advanced thereby. Looking at the events of the last ten or fifteen years, it becomes plain that if the liberal democratic party had deliberately set about the work of undermining the credit and authority of parliament, it could not have succeeded better than it actually has, through forcing upon the various groups and parties of parliament the necessity of making shifting and temporary alliances and coalitions. If it is its purpose to diminish the power of parliament, the party has already been measurably successful. It has, however, not gained this success by consistently following any definite policy of government, but rather by making opportune arrangements with this or that party or faction. At the present time, it controls one-third of the senators and nearly one-fourth of the deputies. Members of the party have repeatedly been

ministers of state and have exercised great influence in successive cabinets.

With this brief characterization of Chilian parties in mind, we shall now proceed to a brief review of the parliamentary history since 1891. Under President Jorje Montt (1891–1896), the government was at first carried on by a coalition between the parties that had been successful in the revolution. It may here be noted in passing that, in Chilian parlance, *coalition* refers to a union between opposite parties such as conservatives and liberals, while *alliance* refers to a union of similar groups such as the liberal alliance. In 1892 an attempt was made to govern entirely with liberal elements, but it was not possible to carry out this plan then or at a later time. The liberal democrats or balmacedists, who entered the parliament in large numbers after the elections of 1894, were still too hostile to the other liberals, who had opposed their chief, to make common cause with them. In 1896 they united with the radical party and with some liberals to support the candidacy of Vincente Reyes. Who was, however, defeated by F. Errázuriz Echaurren, son of the president of like name, who was supported by the old liberal and conservative coalition. During his régime, the conservative party gained the ascendancy, although it was not by itself able to carry on the government entirely without assistance from liberal and nationalist votes. The attempt to pass a number of reactionary measures with respect to primary education and ecclesiastical matters alarmed the liberals, and they made a strong effort to reconstitute the union of liberal parties. The result of this effort was the election of Don Jerman Riesco as the representative of liberal principles against the opposition of Don Pedro Montt, who was at this time supported by the conservatives and nationalists. The convention of 1901 was composed of the liberal members of parliament, past and present. As they are themselves elected by the people, their selection of a presidential candidate was looked upon as a step in the direction of further fortifying the freedom of elections. Conventions for the nomination of presidents had been in use since 1875 but in the early conventions there had been a strong representation of the appointed official element. The administration of Señor Riesco began with the attempt to govern through the liberal alliance. He, however, soon fell out with the

liberal democratic party and the alliance was accordingly broken up. Great confusion and disorder followed. There were during this presidential period sixteen different cabinets. In some of the individual positions changes were even more frequent; thus there were eighteen different ministers of finance, which would give an average tenure of about three months.

During the last decade, parliamentary politics has been a succession of coalitions and alliances in which every group and party has allied itself at various times with every other. The history of the first part of the present administration of Don Pedro Montt will give an insight into this confusion. The president was elected by a combination of nationalists, conservatives, radicals, and liberals, while his opponent, Señor Lazcano, was supported by a conservative-liberal-democratic faction. President Montt originally tried to govern through what is called an administrative cabinet, by which is meant a ministry selected from the point of view of administrative convenience and efficiency without strict regard to the constellation of parties in the chambers. When this cabinet failed, the experiment was tried of appointing one minister from each of the six parties (*Gabinete universal-politico*). This cabinet lasted for about eight months. During its incumbency, the conservatives again became completely united. Their prepondering influence led to the appointment in 1907 of a ministry in which half the members were conservatives. This situation caused the liberal parties to seek to bring about an alliance among themselves. When the Vergara cabinet of 1907 failed in September, a combination of nationalist with liberal and radical parties was formed but this alliance did not have control of the senate, where the conservatives are exceptionally strong. President Montt therefore again tried an administration cabinet, that of Sotomayor, in which there were four nationalists and two liberals. This cabinet maintained itself until August, 1908, and succeeded in having the budget passed through the house. At this date, however, the liberal parties had finally brought about an alliance which was governed by a joint committee composed of two members of each party. Controversies were to be solved by a tribunal of arbiters, one from each party. The result of this arrangement was the cabinet of Señor Figueroa, which contained one liberal, one radical, two liberal democrats, and two nationalists.

It will be seen that the influence of the president was strong enough to keep one or more nationalists in the cabinet at all times. Through desertion on the part of some of its supporters, the Figueroa cabinet had to resign on December 19, 1908. Its fall was occasioned largely by the action of liberal democratic members. For several weeks, the president vainly attempted to form a new cabinet and it was only on January 10 that the government could be reconstituted.

From this brief account, it will be apparent that while the revolution of 1891 has indeed firmly established the principle that the president cannot govern with a cabinet that lacks parliamentary support, yet that very revolution introduced elements of confusion into the party arrangements of Chile which make a successful working of the system in its present form well nigh impossible. It is true the parliamentary and ministerial crises are not accompanied with convulsions in the social and commercial life of the nation. The administration proceeds along its regular course, and while the public is interested in what is going on, there is no fear or apprehension of disastrous consequences. And yet this constant change in the personnel of the ministry, this constant uncertainty as to the future, does have a very deleterious effect upon public administration, as indeed could not be otherwise. It is a strange and interesting fact that the chief element of this situation is the insertion into the libera groups of a party which bears the name of a man whose life went out in the efforts to confine the power of parliament within narrow limits.

In Chile at the present time, nearly everyone is a critic of the parliamentary system. The instability and confusion which the multiplicity of parties has introduced into Chilian political life is laid at the door of the system of cabinet government. Everyone interested in public affairs is attempting to analyze the situation, to get at the root of the evil, and to suggest reforms.

It is generally stated that the quality of the personnel in both chambers has declined since the principle of free elections was established. The critics of the system look back almost with regret to the days when a beneficent and powerful government still saw to it that "good and patriotic" men were elected to parliament. At that time, parliament contained, in addition to a large number of substan-

tial landholders and country gentlemen, representatives of political expertship in the persons of high administrative officials and professors of the faculties of law and political science. The law of parliamentary incompatibilities directed against the excessive power of the executive has excluded the expert element by providing that functionaries of the public service shall not be members of parliament. It is also declared by the critics that many men of a lower type, men having only superficial gifts of pleasant address, forward political climbers, as well as those who have nothing to recommend them but the money which they spend lavishly in elections, have found seats in the Chilian parliament. On such a matter a foreign observer would hardly be able to institute just comparisons. It is true that the discussions in the older parliaments were more serious and perhaps more dignified, but it must be confessed that in all parliaments the quality of discussion has degenerated. Under the Chilian system, the deputies and senators receive no pay. On this point too, the Chilian parliament is a faithful reproduction of the prototype of parliamentarism in Great Britain. On this account, parliament is composed of men of independent means. There may be isolated cases of politicians who make a living out of their trade, but in general the members of parliament are men of independent income who devote themselves to political affairs out of love for political life or because of their desire to represent the interests of their class. The radical party has adopted into its programme a demand for payment to members, which is also a tenet of the democratic party; they argue that it should be made possible for any intelligent citizen to represent a constituency in parliament. This question is, however, not as yet being seriously considered by the majority of Chilian public men. The aristocratic traditions of Chilian politics are opposed to any such arrangement.

The most serious danger to Chilian public life arises from the almost universal use of money to influence the result of elections. This is an evil which all states having a democratic electorate have to contend with. It is rendered specially virulent and dangerous in Chile on account of the fact that the electorate is not homogeneous but contains great masses of people who are ignorant and lack all political education. Education itself is of course no guarantee of political morality or even of political efficiency in an electorate. Even the best educated

populations may be moved by narrowly selfish and corrupt motives or may be indolent and apathetic in political matters. Yet an appeal on the basis of principles and ideas is scarcely possible with an electorate that is lacking in education, so that education must certainly be said to be a condition *sine qua non* for giving the representative system a chance of asserting a beneficent influence upon public life. The development of popular education is recognized to be one of the most serious tasks to be undertaken and carried through by the Chilian people. In order to combat corruption, it has also been proposed by the liberal party to limit election expenses. It would be futile, of course, to rely solely upon a law for the elimination of corrupting influences, which may take a less direct and more insinuating form than money bribery. Nevertheless, corrupt practices legislation has always proved useful in educating the public conscience and in avoiding the grosser breaches of public morality. The extreme form of penalty suggested by some public men in Chile—the loss of representation for any district in which corruption occurs—is too stringent to commend itself to the Chilian public; but some punitive legislation combatting open corruption is to be looked for.

Another evil is beginning to creep in through the use by the chambers, especially the senate, of their power to decide cases of contested elections. As this power rests entirely with either house concerning its respective members, it would be easy to turn it into an instrument for a wholesale perversion of the electoral system. In the senate, the conservative members supported by a few others have formed a group or *bloc* which has been able to control decisions in electoral contests. The nature of some decisions recently rendered in favor of the interests of the *bloc* has caused the motives of such action to be questioned, and it is quite generally charged that the power of determining elections has been used for party purposes. The liberal parties have accordingly adopted into their platforms resolutions calling for the creation of an independent tribunal of elections. Such a court would have the complete and ultimate power to determine cases of dispute. These parties also favor the entire severance of the electoral machinery from that of the municipal governments. This union, as stated above, was effected after the revolution of 1891 in order to render impossible the interference of the central administra-

tion in national elections. But it has been found that the system in its present form encourages corruption and the perversion of the electoral function for the benefit of parties and individuals. It is, therefore, proposed to create an entirely independent machinery for the supervision of elections.

The defect in the present Chilian system which makes itself felt most disagreeably consists in the frequent changes of ministries. Excessive instability is thus introduced not only into parliamentary and party life but into the very administration of the republic. We have already seen that ministries change on the average every four months. The record figure of ministerial change in any country is certainly that of eighteen ministers of finance during one administrative period of five years. On account of the confusion in Chilian party life a ministerial crisis happens far more frequently than a real crisis of majorities in parliament. It has been stated that only one out of every three or four crises really is the result of a displacement of majorities in the house. The others depend on the temporary shiftings of groups and cliques, in which no principle whatever is involved. Such changes rest entirely upon personal reasons, upon a desire of small groups of representatives to acquire influence with the government, very often for the purpose of gaining a merely local or personal advantage. The effect of this instability upon the administration of public affairs may be imagined. Were it not for the strong underlying sense of authority and of abiding by the law, which characterizes Chilian public life, there would long since have been a disaster. Here again, it becomes clear to what an extent Chile is still governed by a caste, the members of which understand each other and in the main have confidence in the character of each other. They stand for a common social and political interest notwithstanding all their party differences. The sudden and frequent changes in the composition of the government therefore do not exercise a deeply disturbing effect upon Chilian social and political life. They are a part of a great game of politics played by men whose form of thought is cast primarily in political molds. But although no individual crisis or series of crises may shake the underlying stability of Chilian affairs, this succession of changes nevertheless has an extremely deleterious effect upon public business. The ministers of state lack continuity of experience.

They are in many cases young men who have not as yet acquired representative character, who are put in governmental positions because men of wider experience refuse to submit to the chances of political change. The cabinets, indeed, do always contain men of real ability but they by no means offer a field of activity in which great public characters may be developed through continuity of experience and through a constant sense of responsibility for definite policies and political principles. The tenure of the ministers does not depend upon their excellent conduct of affairs, but upon the shifting constellations of parliamentary cliques and groups.

Subservience to narrow local interests permeates the entire Chilian system. This, of course, manifests itself especially in the manner in which parliament deals with appropriations. Many Chilian public men have described for us the manner in which support in gaining public favors is traded for by representatives. In return for a vote for one local appropriation, support is promised to secure special favors in return. The manner in which members of parliament interfere in the administration recalls and exceeds the evils of the French system. They attempt to get for their districts water-works, hospitals, road appropriations, railway service; they seek to determine the appointment of administrative officials in their locality; and in every way they attempt to render the action of the central government subservient to narrow and local purposes.

Under any form of representative government in which deputies are elected by districts, these evils will appear in a more or less virulent form. It is natural that a public representative should consult the wishes of his constituents and it is most difficult to establish and maintain that true representation of the *general interest* of the public upon which in theory parliamentary institutions are founded. Yet in Chile there are certain conditions which render these evils especially virulent. The parties being broken up into infinitesimal groups, there is no true responsibility for general public policies that involve general instead of local interests. Moreover, the growth of municipal government in Chile is so recent that a true communal spirit of independence, a true pride in local self-help, has not as yet been generated. As was stated above, in the words of a Chilian public man, "The public treasury is rich and the localities are poor;" the latter continue to

rely even for their ordinary needs upon assistance from the national treasury, and it is the deputy in congress upon whom they call to get for them the favors which they desire. If he is not successful in getting public works and buildings for his district and in arranging the appointments in a satisfactory way, his own tenure of office may be but a short one. All sorts of private interests must thus be considered. As Senator Reyes said in the liberal convention, "The senator or deputy, after the approval of the national budget, usually with a deficit, takes home to his province—to the religious corporation which bears the name of St. Francis, or the asylum of St. John, or the school of St. Peter—the obolus which he has obtained from congress, in order to pay for service rendered or which he may claim again at an opportune moment." But when the liberal convention proposed to cut down the power of representatives over appropriations, several members objected most strenuously. Their arguments give an insight into the inner workings of Chilian politics. Thus, one of them said: "If I should take to the frontier (*Traiguen*) the news that we had here agreed that deputies should not make any increase in the budget, I am sure that this alone would be sufficient to disperse our party and to make it impossible to get together enough votes for sending a representative to the national congress." Under the old régime, the intendants and governors brought to the attention of the administration the necessities of their regions. The government thereupon distributed its support upon a general plan. At the present time, it is not these administrative officials but the deputies who are relied upon to bring to the notice of the government the local needs. If their representations are not heard, they will try to make a combination by which amendments are introduced augmenting the budget and giving to the localities what they desire. It is stated that the ministers pay no attention to the statements sent them by the intendants and governors. Such papers are duly filed away for future reference; but in the turbulence of political struggles, the reclamations of the deputies have to be listened to first and they alone, it is said, are effective. Some rather amusing arguments were made in the liberal convention against reducing this power of the deputies. One speaker asserted that the town in which he lived would not have had any drinkable water were it not for the parliamentary initiative in

the matter of expenses; another that his province should not be able to get a hospital could they not rely upon the vigorous efforts of their deputies in congress.[1] These speakers concluded that the suppression of parliamentary initiative in the matter of appropriations "will be acceptable only when good government has been established." That the limitation of this activity is itself a necessary step towards the establishment of good government, these men would not admit. As a result of the continuousness of purely personal struggles in parliament and of the insistance of local demands, parliament is sterile as far as real legislative activity is concerned. It does not unite in laying down the lines of a broad public policy for the guidance of the executive, spending its energy and time upon matters of administration which ought to be left to the other departments of government. In a word the Chilian parliament strives to administer and meanwhile it is unlearning the art of government. Such is the view of many Chilian writers.[2]

These conditions, which have been seriously engaging the minds of Chilian public men, have led to the suggestion of a variety of remedies in the way of institutional changes. Both the liberal and the radical parties have proposed that the power of deputies to add to the budget as brought in by the government should be reduced or abolished. It is believed that the entire initiative of the budget should be with the government, which, upon the basis of a complete knowledge of the local and general situation in the country, should distribute public expenditure in such a way as to secure the adequate and continuous improvement of public works and services throughout the country. The piecemeal and discontinuous appropriations of the present time are not only disastrous from the points of view already considered, but they also lead to a great waste of public resources through the lack of continuity in public works, so that very often expenditure already made in a locality is devoid of lasting benefit

[1] According to this speaker, Santiago, being the seat of congress, has fared better than other localities; but when he speaks enthusiastically about the smooth pavements there provided by public expense, the listener, should he happen to have ridden over those pavements, may not have been carried away by the argument.

[2] Among others, Domingo Amunátegui Rivera, in his work on Administrative Law; Senator Vincente Reyes; Alcibiades Roldan; Maximilano Ibañez; and José A. Alfonso.

because it is not followed up according to a general and adequate plan. The remedy suggested is either the entire suppression of the parliamentary power to propose increases in the expenditure under the budget (radical programme); or the provision that the budget itself must be passed without augmentation, should additional items of expenditure be desired, they should have to be introduced and passed as special laws. The latter provision, it is believed, would serve to discourage log rolling, because every proposal of this kind would have to stand upon its merits as a special legislative enactment and it would be far more difficult to exchange favors or to bring in additional grants in a surreptitious way. The adoption of this reform would, of course, not do away with the pressure which individual members may bring to bear upon the executive, but it would secure the working out of a general, definitive budget by the government upon the basis of the needs of the country in general, as from its position of vantage it may see them, and without the danger of having all its plans dislocated and the entire system of expenditure changed by parliamentary action. Both the government and parliament would be forced to take, in matters of expenditure, the public and general, rather than the private and local, view.

A second reform suggested is that of enlarging the districts from which members are elected so that the latter should no longer feel so direct a sense of obligation to the narrow interests of a locality. Under the Chilian system as at present in force, it is not necessary that a deputy should be a resident of his district. On this point, too, the practice of the British system is followed. Nevertheless a great subservience of deputies to local interests has not been avoided.[3] The

[3] J. A. Alfonso, *La Reforma Politica en Chile*. "The congressman who does not listen to the solicitations of his electors, often unjust or merely troublesome; who falls out, for any reason, with the chief or master of the locality; who also does not every day give careful attention to his correspondence with his constituents; frequently falls into disgrace and loses the following election, although he may be a true servant of patriotic and general interests. On the contrary, the deputy who dedicates himself, with a complete disregard of general interests, entirely to serving his electors, to satisfying their individual requests, although they may crack the national treasure chest, who answers all their letters—this deputy is good and great and may be sure of reëlection." The author also states that public men of real ability and importance usually avoid the small electoral districts and become candidates in the larger ones where petty local interests are not so imperative.

suggestions for reform which have been made comprise the modification of the senate as well as of the the lower chamber. The programme of the liberal party purposes the reorganization of the senate in such a manner that one-third of the members shall be elected by the country at large while the other members are distributed among the provinces. With respect to the election of deputies, the suggestion has been made[4] that the representatives should be elected either by the entire nation at large on one ticket or in very large electoral districts.

A third remedy which is suggested consists in granting to the president of the republic the power of dissolving the chamber of deputies in cases of irremediable disagreement. It is part of the liberal democratic programme. In the liberal convention of 1907, two suggestions were made looking toward this reform. According to one, proposed by Sr. Alcibiades Roldan, the president is to be given the power of dissolving the lower house with the consent of the senate. According to the other, he is to be given that power independently but is to exercise it not more than once during his term of five years. The plan thus suggested, while it has not been adopted by the liberal party, is still much discussed in the political circles of Chile and is favored by many as offering a solution of the difficulties. It would, of course, considerably increase the power of the executive, and its adoption would thus involve to a certain extent giving up the fruits of the revolution of 1891. Yet, an appeal to the country would give both president and congressionals an opportunity to defend their course of action in a general election; and the necessity of doing so, it is be believed, would lead all parties to be definite in their policies so that the uncertainty and confusion of party politics would probably disappear and give way to more continuous and more consolidated action. Should some form of these different solutions be adopted, Chile would indeed again have strengthened the presidential office, but her institutions would then even more closely resemble those of Great Britain, under which the executive has the power of dissolution and under which the introduction of money bills is entirely within the hands of the cabinet. The presidential office should, indeed, be a far more positive and active political factor than is the kingship of Great Britain.

[4] By J. A. Alfonso, in his *La Reforma Politica en Chile*, 1909.

The Chilian parties are at the present time so subdivided and so confused in their action that party government cannot be said to exist. This splitting up into factions is partly due to the controversies introduced at the time of the Balmaceda revolution, and more especially to the existence of the personal parties in the Chilian parliament. The fractioning of parties is, however, also encouraged by the use of cumulative voting in parliamentary elections. The object for which this method was introduced was to enable true minority parties to gain some representation in parliament. As it operates at present, however, it serves to break up into small groupings parties that ought to exhibit harmony and cohesion. A province, for instance, in which practically the entire population is liberal, would under the majority election system produce a compact delegation. The system of cumulative voting, however, favors the creation of smaller groups within the party, who will put up candidates in the hope of gaining representation for certain local groupings of interests. In this manner both in parliament and without, the conditions are extremely favorable for an indefinite subdivision of parties. The action of the government has therefore hardly ever been based upon a true majority in parliament. In other words, parliamentary and governmental action has not been determined by a homogeneous majority standing for a definite public policy. Since the revolution of 1891 ,the government has always rested upon coalitions or groupings. Every party has united at some time or other with every other party. Nor has this been due to the action of individual members; the coalitions are, indeed, usually made by the party authorities. Thus even the former president of the liberal party, Don Ramon Barros Luco, was in office together with members of the opposite party and this is true of practically every public man who has held ministerial office in Chile. The groupings which support successive governments are usually false majorities in that they contain elements which are not bound together by any common principle of policy but only by the political convenience of the moment. It is the practice in the Chilian parliament to designate questions upon which every member is free to vote as he pleases without regard to party affiliations, as "open questions" (*cuestiones abiertas*), and it is indeed extremely rare that a question is made a strict party issue. Coalitions between liberals and conservatives

and alliances among the liberal parties rest usually upon questions of administrative arrangements. The withdrawal of one of the minor groups, bound to the majority by no permanent interest, is frequently the sole cause for the fall of a ministry; the majority of votes being destroyed, there is an apparent crisis. Usually no question of principle or policy is involved. The situation of groupings in parliament has simply shifted and a new combination must be arranged for the support of the government.

It is interesting to note that in the Chilian parliament, obstruction has never been continuously and systematically employed. In fact, only upon one occasion, in the discussion in 1901 of the arrangements with Peru with respect to Tacna and Arica, was any recourse had at all to obstructionist tactics. As the Chilian parliament allows very great freedom of discussion and as the previous question is not in use, indefinite obstruction would be possible. That it has not beeu resorted to is probably due to the fact already brought out that the Chilian parliament is a governing council composed of men who understand each other and respect each other's point of view, who have more *esprit de corps* than is usual in contemporary parliamentary bodies. But the absence of obstruction may also be accounted for by the fact that minorities find it easier to attain their objects by making arrangements with the government and with other groups than by engaging in the ungrateful task of dilatory manœuvering.

The confusion in Chilian party life, the lack of cohesion and continuity in party action, the absence of dominating policies, is in the last analysis, due to the fact that none of the parties at the present time rest upon a basis of distinct principles or policies of public action. There is a liberal spirit in Chilian public life, parties are not mere groupings of family or private interest. As a matter of fact, members of the same family may be found in three or four different parties.[5] This quality lends a great interest to Chilian public life and raises it to a high plane. But parliament is suffering from a defect of this great quality, in that the parties are devoid of serious or of stable political foundations. The economic questions which are, at the present time, being discussed, such as the question of metallic conversion, the

[5] The three members of the Huneeus family in the congress of 1906–1909 belong to three different parties.

question of great public works, the question of the customs tariff, are not dealt with on the basis of party cohesion. The most divergent opinions on these matters may be found in any of the party groups. The same is true of labor and general social legislation. While the radicals and liberals originally resisted such legislation from the point of view of their traditional *laissez faire* theories, all parties have now come to adopt into their programme resolutions favoring improvement in the condition of the poorer classes. On questions of international policy, the parties stand united for any action which will increase the influence of Chile in the councils of the nation. At the liberal convention of 1907, this lack of differentiating policies was discussed and it was pointed out that the only question upon which a distinct issue could be raised with the conservative party was the matter of the relations of the church to the state. Both the radical and the liberal party have adopted a resolution calling for the separation of church and state and for the further development of the system of lay instruction. But it is questionable whether this issue is really sufficiently strong to constitute a pivot of party action. While the clerical influence has been very favorable to the conservative party, the Chilian public does not seem sufficiently interested in a radical remodeling of the relations of the temporal to the clerical powers. The interest in merely structural questions of politics, such as suffrage, disestablishment, etc., has greatly declined the world over. People are more interested in the substance of political action than in matters of structural arrangement. In Chili, moreover, the church is not resisted as an institution. No party desires to combat religion and the church as such. Constitutional arrangements affected by the policies in question, while they will be a subject of discussion and legislation for years to come, do not seem to afford a sufficient basis for a definite, adequate and stable alignment of political parties.

The remedies suggested for the mitigation of the confused conditions in Chilian party life are designed to place the action of parliament upon the basis of general rather than local interest and to discourage the formation of coalitions between opposing parties. The structural changes already discussed which contemplate larger powers in the executive and the creation of more extensive electoral districts tend in this direction. Both the liberal and the radical parties have

passed resolutions condemning the use of coalitions in parliament. According to the statutes of the radical party, coalitions and combinations can be entered into by that party only after the *Junta Central* or directorate, by a three-fourths majority of votes, has approved of such step. It is also provided that the alliances formed shall always have for their purpose the realization of some points of the radical programme. The adoption of a similar provision was moved in the liberal convention of 1907 but was resisted by members who held that the party should leave itself free to act as the exigencies of parliamentary politics required. The statutes as finally adopted provide simply that no coalition can be entered into without the consent of the general directorate which must have been accorded in a session at which two-thirds of the total directorate are present. It is therefore unlikely that the practice of coalition will be abolished through directly prohibiting such action on the part of party organizations. Even should such a rule be adopted there would still remain the difficulty of enforcing it upon all the members of the party. When in 1909 the liberal directorate tried to remonstrate with several members who had acted counter to the party policy, they refused to be reprimanded and asserted their independence. As long as parties are subdivided and as long as minorities can gain political advantages only through uniting with others, the policy of coalition and alliance will be the method of action in the Chilian parliament. A permanent alliance of the liberal parties in opposition to the conservative forces would, of course, solve the difficulty, but the liberals are separated not only by opinions but also by personal interests to such an extent that a permanent alliance has thus far been impossible. Chilian public life would, indeed, gain enormously could that alliance be established upon a permanent footing, because then Chile would be endowed with that *sine qua non* of successful parliamentary government, the existence of two permanently organized and coherent parties.

In order to see this end achieved, it will perhaps be necessary to wait until stronger economic issues have arisen in Chilian life. Should Chile develop an extensive manufacturing industry resting upon capitalism, there would undoubtedly occur a realignment of political factors leading to the establishment of more permanent parties similar to the two great parties which divide the electorate in England and in

the United States. The factors in opposition would be the manufacturers on the one hand, the agriculturalists and miners on the other; the city laboring population, the small merchants, the farm-workers in the country regions. Political forces would then be realigned according to dominating economic policies. The questions of social and labor legislation would also assume new aspects upon which men would differ more than they do at present. But meanwhile, as such a basis for permanent party organization is still lacking in Chile, the public men of that country will continue in their efforts to introduce and render current a juster interpretation of parliamentary functions—that parliament is not to interfere in the infinitesimal concerns of the administration but is to be the great council of the nation in which policies are determined upon and in which the action of the government is submitted to a liberal though searching analysis and criticism. More deference will be paid to expertship. Where expertship can speak with authority, parliament will allow it to assert itself. Many Chilian public men bewail the growing materialism of the country; the insistence upon private interest they attribute to a waning of the more ideal enthusiasms of former eras. In that respect, however, Chile with the rest of the world must adjust herself to conditions in which the material interests of the nation are, as a matter of fact, given a great deal of attention. But a nation which energetically develops its resources, which introduces efficiency of organization and administration, which demands exact methods in public accounting, is not, though insisting upon material matters, by any means necessarily shut out from molding all these material concerns into a broad and stable basis for a national life in which all the higher interests may find development and expression. The traditions of Chilian public life are such as to promise that the mastery of natural forces which the age requires will not lead to a deterioration of the national spirit.

Meanwhile, Chile is engaged in an experiment, which political scientists the world over will follow with deep interest. Her experience will contribute a quota of important dimensions to our knowledge of the workings of parliamentary institutions and the interplay of political action organized upon a party basis. The underlying sanity of her political life, the wisdom embodied in her main political tradi-

tions, give assurance that, whatever present perplexities she may be confronted with her statesmen will patiently work their way to an effective solution.

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