

Sundry news

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would be under no obligation to resign office.

(e) Resume.

The Confederation consists of the Swiss People, considered as a solidary unit, as well as the Cantons, considered as 22 federated States with equal rights. The People are represented by the National Council, yet they reserve their right of opposition by a veto against the decisions of the Chambers in the shape of the facultative Referendum. Moreover, no modification of the Constitution can be made, if the People of a majority of the Cantons oppose it. If eight Cantons demand a Referendum, the Laws voted by the Chambers will have to be submitted to the People's vote.

The equality of the two Councils is based upon the equality of the constitutive elements of the Confederation. The rights of Initiative or Referendum, safeguarded by the people or by the Cantons, correspond to the principle of the sovereignty of the People. Nevertheless, the disadvantages of an assembly government and of undisciplined parliamentarism have been avoided, as the Federal Council, i.e. the Government of the country, is elected for a term of 4 years, and is not liable to resign office, if its action meets with the disapproval of the Parliament.

In all these institutions one can recognise the will to put the rule of the People's Sovereignty into practice, and at the same time to give the public Authorities the necessary stability and independence.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE IN THE CANTONS.

In most of the Cantons the Legislative Assembly consists of one Chamber, in which the representation of the People is assured in a similar manner to that adopted by the Confederation, to guarantee the Democracy of the People and the stability of the Government.

Most of the Cantonal Governments are elected by the direct vote of the People.

GENERAL CHARACTER OF THE REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE.

In all sections of the Administration and of the various Authorities the collegial system is preferred to that of individuals, who bear the sole responsibility. Reminding one of the Anglosaxon "team spirit," it is the result of a double pre-occupation. In the first line the Swiss have an instinctive aversion to every form of personal power in politics. Secondly, they cultivate the habit of electing to positions of Public Authority representatives of the principal political, social, religious and language groups existing among them.

The collegial system, therefore, is the expression of a democratic need and also of the diversity of the population. It is so carefully applied, that it is often said that Switzerland has no Chief of the State nor a supreme Commandant of her Army in peace times. In the Confederation the Executive Power rests with the Government as a whole, i.e., the Federal Council, consisting of 7 members of the Parliament which elects them and each year nominates one of these magistrates as President of the Confederation. While continuing to supervise his Department in the Administration, the President, who is just "primus inter pares," represents the Government at State receptions and ceremonies, without taking any political action on his sole responsibility.

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SUNDRY NEWS.

FEDERAL. Switzerland has entered the field of atomic research, called nuclear physical research in scientific circles, and will spend an annual amount of one-million francs for this purpose under a decree submitted by the Federal Council to our two houses of parliament. It is stressed that we shall never make atomic bombs and that the subsidy is intended only for research for peaceful purposes.