

destroy independence of thought and action, and not unfrequently results in the exclusion of valuable men from a Ministry.

8. The constitutional practice of a Ministry resigning when any important measure which it has introduced has been rejected has led to the mischievous practice of allowing Bills to drop whenever their passage becomes doubtful, thus compelling the Ministry to become followers, rather than wise and courageous leaders; and, it almost necessarily compels a Ministry, under the instinct of self-preservation, to pander to any popular delusion of the hour, instead of making a stand against shortsighted popular impulses.

9. But what the colonies have most to deplore is the fact that each Ministry is tempted to entrench its position and to buy off opposition by the expenditure of public money, a proceeding which has been felt to answer the double purpose of making the work pleasant at the time, and difficult to any succeeding Ministry taking office with the intention of pursuing a more prudent and honest policy.

10. In the opinion of your Committee the most suitable model for our imitation will be found in the present Government of the Swiss Federation. After twenty-six years' experience, the Constitution accepted in 1848 was revised and improved in 1874, and has worked remarkably well ever since. Both the original of 1848 and the revised Constitution of 1874 were the work of a committee of able and experienced men, many of whom were thoroughly conversant with the forms of government adopted both in Great Britain and in the United States; and, by taking that which has proved good and suitable from either, they have succeeded in avoiding the weaknesses of both.

11. The recommendations which your Committee offer under the head of "Executive Reform" are intended to secure the following advantages:—

I. That the Parliament may be enabled to exercise a real supervision and control over all legislative and administrative action.

II. That the executive may be selected by the Parliament itself in a manner likely to secure the services of the men best suited to the work, and at the same time so place them that they can seek the public welfare, untrammelled by party considerations and undegraded by the practice of stratagems to secure their own positions.

III. That the representatives of the people may have freedom to vote according to their unbiased opinions, without the necessity of supporting what they believe to be wrong or opposing what they believe to be right for the purpose of serving party interests.

IV. That the people of the colony may be able to look up to the Ministry as men engaged in watching over their interests, and not as men waging party warfare.

V. That the people of the colony may have confidence in the administration of public affairs, take an intelligent interest in the proceedings of the Legislature, and thus create a healthy public opinion on public affairs, and the part taken by their representatives.

With these objects in view, your Committee submit the following outline of the Constitution which they have agreed to recommend:—

EXECUTIVE REFORM.

I. Upon the assembling of Parliament after each general election, and as soon as the Speaker of the House of Representatives has been elected, he shall then, for the twenty-four hours next ensuing, receive nominations for seven members of the Ministry. Any person qualified to be elected to the House of Representatives shall be eligible for election to the Ministry. The nominations shall be signed by at least six members of the House of Representatives and by the candidate, or the consent of the candidate may be sent by telegram.

II. The Speaker shall notify the closing of the nominations and fix the time for the election, such time being not more than seventy-two hours, nor less than twenty-four, from the time of closing the nominations, provided that the Speaker may remedy any irregularity of form therein.

III. The voting shall be taken by ballot, and upon the principle of proportional representation, each member having one transferable vote, exercisable in the alternative for as many candidates as he pleases, by writing a figure denoting the order of his choice opposite each name, as illustrated in Schedule A.

IV. The Speaker shall preside over the election, and may appoint such assistants as he may require. Each candidate shall have the right to appoint a scrutineer. The counting of votes shall be proceeded with as prescribed in Schedule B, and the Speaker shall declare the result, which shall be final.

V. Any member of the Ministry may vacate his office in such manner, or for any such cause as may vacate a seat in the House of Representatives; and the House of Representatives may at any time, by resolution, declare the appointment of any Minister cancelled, provided such resolution be carried by a majority of two-thirds of the whole House.

VI. Vacancies in the Ministry shall be filled by ballot taken in the House of Representatives. The vote of an absolute majority of the whole House shall be required in the case of one vacancy; any greater number shall be elected after the manner prescribed in clause 15.

VII. The Ministers shall each year elect one of their number to be their Chairman and another to be Vice-Chairman, and shall determine the department which each member shall preside over. No Minister shall be Chairman for two successive years.

VIII. At meetings of the Ministry, if the Chairman be not present, the Vice-Chairman shall preside; but no action shall be valid unless four Ministers are present and concur.

IX. The Ministry shall make regulations for the conduct of business, keep minutes of their proceedings, and present copies of such minutes and regulations, attested by the signatures of the Chairman and at least one other Minister, to each Chamber of the Legislature upon the first day of the meeting of each session of Parliament.