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THE CHILEAN REVOLUTION

AND THE

BALMACEDA ADMINISTRATION.

SPEECH DELIVERED AT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ON THE 28TH OF APRIL, 1891,

BY

DON JULIO BAÑADOS ESPINOSA,

a Representative from Ovalle.

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**Speech delivered at the House of Representatives on the
28th of April, 1891, by Don Julio Bañados Espinosa,
a Representative from Ovalle.**

The mixed commission appointed to examine the draft of reform of the constitution has thought fit to select one senator and one representative to explain in each of the two houses, respectively, the antecedents of the present bill upon the extraordinary powers now under the consideration of the house.

I have the honor of being appointed to address the house upon the subject.

No Chilean fails to understand the serious situation in which the republic is now.

In presence of the extraordinary events which are taking place in our country, it is our imperative duty to prepare the pages of their historic process which our fellow-citizens shall have to form to every one of the participants in our present political affairs.

These considerations compel me to ask the indulgence of the house for the expression of my opinions with that frankness becoming a man who is conscious of his duties.

Only the name of this Constituent Congress shows the solemnity of the occasion and of the present historical moment in reference to the vital interests and the life of the nation.

For the last thirty years the Chilean congress has periodically opened its sessions without being threatened by any other danger than the two foreign wars of 1866 and 1879.

If the opening of the sessions of congress has taken place pending any other very serious political agitations, they were never of a character to divide the Chilean family nor to endanger the stability of our institutions.

To-day the Constituent Congress begins its labors surrounded by the cries and tears of numerous families in mourning and under a crowd of misfortunes; of widows and orphans who have suddenly undergone irreparable losses. [Hear !]

Besides these great evils we have to witness the vicissitudes produced in our commerce, our industries, our national revenues, and even our public credit abroad. And as the climax to all these misfortunes, the flames of fratricidal discord burning in our own hearts and disturbing our family relations.

Why in so short time and in so very few hours have we to experience such a radical change in our manner of existence and the traditional habits of Chilean society? Why, in the midst of inalterable peace with foreign countries, have we such a numerous army and witness the sinister spectacle of war threatening us all? Here is the question and the problem that we have to examine calmly, conscientiously, and patriotically.

Chile has always preserved public order and domestic peace. She was born in as poor a cradle as Christ himself was, wearing rags of poverty as her titles of nobility, and hearing always the noise of war for over three centuries.

Poverty, the permanent condition of war with the bravest and most indomitable race of the world, and the peculiar character of our people, naturally sober and peaceful, made the ideal of order and domestic peace the favorite aspiration of our public men, of our liberators, and of our great historical parties.

After the revolutionary war which brought about our independence, our public liberties were sacrificed, during the administration of one of the illustrious founders of the republic, Don Bernardo O'Higgins, in order to suppress anarchy. The struggle for our emancipation began. Order in the administration and in the whole Chilean family was established on solid foundations.

The honest conviction of a few statesmen, thinking that the time had come for the extension of our public liberties and for the restoration of the authority of the Executive Power, brought about the abdication of O'Higgins, thus fostering anarchy, military mutinies, and endless changes of government, amidst internal struggles which lasted from 1823 up to the time of the battle of Lircái, in 1830.

The chief cause of the triumph obtained then by the *pelucón* party, representing the government of authority, and the ruin of the *pipiolo* party, representing the government of liberty, was not only the power of bayonets, but the weariness of the country under the prevailing disorderly condition at that time, as well as

the national aspiration to secure peace, even at the price of restricting our fundamental rights.

From 1833, the date of our constitution, the struggle for order was energetically pursued by the administrations under Presidents Prieto, Bulnes, and Montt, and disorders, due to a restless spirit of reforms and innovations, were constantly produced, on all sides, up to the time of the bloody battle of Cerro Grande, where anarchy was buried and a new era of domestic peace inaugurated.

Permit me, Mr. President, to make an honorable mention of those who defended public order through those memorable conflicts.

Blessed be the memory of the parties and the men who at that time of transition and effervescence sacrificed for the benefit of public order, their liberties as citizens! They understood as we do that there is no possible liberty without order, and that liberty planted on the slippery ground of anarchy soon degenerates into a demagogy and licentiousness. [Cheers].

From 1861 to 1891 the wheel of the destinies of Chile has been going on through flowers. What a fine spring has Chile had during the last thirty years.

During so brilliant period our dear country rose before the world with her head covered with the laurels of victory, the country dignified by honest work and true progress. Who can ever forget the anxieties, the generous struggles of those memorable political campaigns, the gigantic push and the unselfish constancy of the men and parties to secure in peace the evolution from the rule of authority to that of liberty. [Cheers.]

Pending that historical period our legislation underwent reforms at the level of the most advanced in the world, when the Chileans had conquered all liberties compatible with the national safety, and when our soldiers gave battles and made our country greater, when our foreign credit competed advantageously with that of the wealthiest nations of the world, when our commerce and industries, propelled by incredible powers, had attained their great development, when the culture of sciences, arts, and literature were spreading light all around, and, indeed, when we were all, and in all parts of the republic, feeling emotions, fore-runners of the highest state of civilization. [Cheers in the benches and galleries.]

The 7th of January, however, has made a sudden change of affairs, and our country sobs and lowers its face under the folds of our flag in mourning. The navy rose and mutinied on the 7th of January! Why so much infelicity and so dense shades of sorrow after so much happiness and light? We have seen how much had been done by the preceding generations, how much they had to stand, and how much blood was shed to secure the establishment of public order.

Let us find out, now, what are the imaginary and the true reasons for the abrupt interruption of thirty years of peace, and for the wreck of the work of our ancestors, with the ferocity of fanatics destroying the idols of their adversaries.

During the administration of Perez, Errázuriz, Pinto, and Santa María, the antagonism of parties, among political circles, was sometimes shown by outbursts of rage followed by bitter contentions and energetic resistance, but never were those contentions taken from their proper field—the tribune, the press, the public meetings, and the electoral conventions.

The administration of His Excellency Señor Santa María left the liberals sadly divided, on account of the election of his successor, and the conservatives in the field badly hurt by the sanction of the so-called law of theological reforms. So that when His Excellency Señor Balmaceda was elected, he found his political party split, and a prey to discord, confronted besides by the asperities of his adversaries. Society was deeply excited and distrust ruled all around. He had only two ways left—either to oppose both the conservatives and the seceding liberals together, or to hoist the white flag among the contending parties.

By means of an absolute neutrality, forgetting past hatreds and dissensions, he tried to pacify the conservatives, while endeavoring, at the same time, to bind together the liberal party, through a program of development and improvements in the way of public works and other reforms, calculated to forget past contentions, and to bring together all patriotic and progressive men.

During his administration he has carried out, to the letter, the part of his program in reference to a strict neutrality with the church and the conservative party. Nobody in Chile, not even the illustrious prelates nor any other believers, can find a single act of the Government, before the 7th of last January, tending to

affect, in any way, the consciences or the religious ideas of the Chileans. On the contrary, numerous acts of good-will and even of protection will be reckoned. Benevolence has been carried to the extreme of giving up the enforcement of what has been cherished as the dearest reforms of the liberal party. [That is so.]

I will soon review, in a few words, the well-known history of the several political parties and their relations with the chief magistrate. Then we will see how His Excellency Señor Balma-
ceda has filled his part, in regard to the program of the union of the liberal party. If this phase of his policy is open to controversies and discussions, nobody will deny that he has filled, beyond any expectations, his great plan of public works and political reforms, tending to secure the independence of the public powers and to stimulate the intellectual progress of the people, to improve the public wealth, to foment national industries, and to correct the errors and defects found in the public administration, filling up the space left empty by the deficiency of the laws and regulations.

Only this part of the program of government, upheld by the present chief magistrate, would be an ample foundation for the unqualified anathema of the present and future generations against the present revolution. [Cheers.]

Permit me, Mr. President, to mention in a few words the praiseworthy labors accomplished by the present administration. I am enabled to do so, as I feel honored in claiming my share in them and a good title to the consideration of my friends and our party. We may talk freely to-day, since nobody could well trace our convictions and sentiments to any ambitious ideas for political ascendance. We are not dealing with an administration which begins, but with one about coming to a close. We talk about a sunset. [Cheers.]

The efficiency of the judicial power has been improved by an addition of a second section organized for the labors of the Supreme Court; by two more for the Court of Appeals at Santiago; one at the State Court of Talca, and by district justices in every department of the republic, instead of the former alcaldes of the old legislation.

The postal service has been materially extended with new facilities, introducing the Postal Union package and money-order sys-

tem, and opening numerous new post-offices in the rural portion of the country. Telegraphs have been largely extended. Under the present administration new lines (2,787 kilometers) have been added, bringing us more in contact, stimulating commerce, social progress, and the national industries. Eighty-two new telegraphic offices have been opened to public service.

The administration has rendered a most decided support to charitable institutions by the erection of fine hospitals, as elegant as that which will soon be inaugurated by the side of the Medical School building.

We might safely state that the present administration has created, through their constant and persevering endeavors, a permanent system of foreign immigration and colonization, in order to improve the national industries and open vast and new fields to the improvement of Chile and the human race.

Our international relations have been maintained with the traditional integrity, honor, self-respect, prudence, and patriotism of the Chilean diplomatic service.

Few administrations have had to deal with more important or more transcendental questions. At the end of the war with Peru and Chile, numerous claims were made against Chile, by acts of our military forces, pending that glorious campaign.

The claims instituted before the corresponding courts of arbitration, organized under His Excellency Señor Santa Maria's administration, amount in the aggregate to \$25,415,727, compromised and reduced by that of His Excellency, Señor Balmaceda, after numerous and tedious litigations, to only \$717,000—Chilean silver dollars.

The claims, on account of the Nitrate orders, were also settled with profit to the country, removing the risks and troubles which were affecting unfavorably her credit and good relations with friendly countries. This claim for \$10,607,488 (of 44 pence) was settled for £1,113,781—sterling pounds.

In regard to the most serious case, that of the Peruvian bondholders' claim, an honorable compromise has been reached. The principal of this claim was £32,000,000 besides the interest from 1876, or about \$200,000,000. It was settled for £800,000—sterling pounds.

Not long ago, Mr. President, we saw the claim introduced by

the French Minister in favor of the firm of Dreyffus. The affair was set aside through the tact, prudence, and patriotism of the Chief Magistrate.

Besides those important settlements, many others have been gradually reached, and our political skies have been cleared of stormy clouds, which were threatening our public peace.

In regard to the relations of Church and State, a settlement with His Holiness was adjusted in reference to the appointment of Bishops and Arch-bishops, leaving the powers of the State unimpaired and the consciences of the faithful at rest.

One of the more important reforms undertaken by the present administration is the new penitentiary system. The diversity of direction, the regulations, discipline, order, and economical organization of the old system were not always consistent with our constitutional rights, and discrimination between penal matters and arrests imposed to delinquents and to prosecuted persons. The new organization was enforced in 1888, imparting unity to the service, giving a wider margin to the fiscal management, and affording easy means for the correction of all abuses and for the protection of the innocent and the guilty persons alike.

The improvement and diffusion of public education has been one of the chief objects of reform by this administration. It will be enough for me to state, in corroboration of this assertion, that everything connected with the institutions of learning has been modified from their very foundations.

When the fine building for the Medical School was finished, new regulations were accompanied by a new system of studies; new branches of medical science have been entrusted to several foreign Professors of high standing in their countries, and of well-known abilities, under proper courses of lectures, leading the way, as true apostles of learning, to the care of public health and the preservation of life.

The courses of mathematics have undergone a true revolution with us. The system of studies has been adjusted to the industrial exigencies of the age and to the present progress of this useful branch of human knowledge. A Polytechnic school, served by eminent teachers brought from abroad, under proper contracts, has been duly organized. The empiric old system has paved the way for the modern multiform specialization, in keeping with the industrial progress of the times.

A good institution of learning requires most competent Professors. Under this principle the present administration has founded the PEDAGOGICAL INSTITUTE, where persons intended for the professoriate are trained under European teachers of well-known abilities.

High education has been the subject of a radical change with the adoption of the concentric system of teaching, under twenty-seven Professors specially qualified for the new methods, which have produced a revolution in the scientific world.

The primary instruction has not been left behind in these progressive new systems. The normal schools have been reformed, improved, and enlarged. New plans of studies and new regulations have been adopted, and we might as well state that the manual, artistic, gymnastic, and civic branches of training have been created.

The branches of special instruction have been energetically and steadily pushed, such as the establishment of schools of agriculture, mechanical arts, and of mines. A school of design, another for deaf and dumb, and for blind, as well as professional schools for children of both sexes, have been established.

For the first time Chile has laid the foundation for the education of the fair sex, building a lyceum for girls in Valparaiso and sending to Europe for the full complement of professors.

The Museum has been completely reformed in its re-organization. The Conservatory of Music has produced the first and really brilliant results, due to the protection rendered to this institution during the last three years.

National gratitude ought not to lose sight of those men devoted to the progress of the country, in fomenting popular instruction.

The great political and social revolutions are peacefully carried to a successful issue, while at home and attending to public schools.

A chair of learning is a focus of light, always illuminating our spirits and guiding our hearts. [Cheers.]

Notwithstanding that the reforms operated by the present administration in popular instruction should suffice to entitle it to the admiration and thanks of all future generations, this manly and progressive spirit of reform has been extended to every other branch of the public service.

In every country the people pay by expensive taxes and public imposts for the material works undertaken by their governments, but that is not so in the present case. Instead of increasing the taxes they have been lowered down.

A good portion of the public debt has been paid and cancelled to an amount beyond our expectations.

The following taxes have been abolished:

The *alcabalas* (taxes on certain sales); those on patents; on military pensions; on inheritances; on domestic furniture; on certain kind of machinery. The extra charge on import duties on flax, line and jute for gunny bags, and coarse cotton goods. The extra charge on the internal importation and storage of goods has been reduced from 47% to 35%.

The total of these suppressions, reducing public imposts and burthens on the people, amount to over two million dollars a year.

The licenses on certain kind of commercial establishments, and for the exercise of professional and mechanical industries, have been left to the municipal control for the local wants of the respective districts.

The payments of the public debt have continued, reducing it by the ordinary installments and by extra conversions besides. Thus far the payments of the pending balance of the debt of the Santiago and Quillota railway, of the Garland bonds, of the Llallai to San Felipe, and the bonds of the Santiago and San Fernando, and those of the National loan of 1882 have been reduced to the amount of \$3,573,100.

No foreign loans have been contracted, except those for reproductive State works, like the new railroads, and to cancel the Nitrate certificates, representing a most valuable public profit.

Very successful and profitable conversions of the foreign loans of 1858, 1867, 1870, 1873, and 1875, have been obtained, reducing the annual public expenditures on that account in \$1,253,757 less than the corresponding usual appropriation.

From the time when Chile was, against her wishes and in defense of her honor, dragged into a war against Peru and Bolivia, it was deemed to be her unavoidable duty to keep her army and navy on the best possible footing of armament and discipline.

His Excellency, Señor Balmaceda, has tried his best to have

the army and navy well provided with every necessary and most improved element of war, after the latest discovery and improvement.

During the present year our army and navy will receive the most efficient artillery known, and the last portion of the repeating Mänlicher rifles, which will place our infantry on a footing with the best in the world.

By the Military School, furnished with an improved system of studies, the School of Classes has been created. Its usefulness cannot be questioned.

The navy, which has proved so ungrateful, has been the favorite branch with the present administration, which has done more for the power and greatness of the country, than all the previous administrations together from the time of our independence. Indeed, the vessels, built during the past five years, form a fleet by far more powerful and superior to that of the latter period of the Santa Maria administration.

We will soon receive the iron-clad ARTURO PRAT, the largest in both Americas; the two cruisers, PRESIDENTE ERRAZURIS and PRESIDENTE PINTO, with the two tenders CONDOR and HUEMAL. The torpedo cruisers, LYNCH and CONDELL, have just obtained a glorious victory over the rebel fleet, in one of the boldest and most brilliant combats ever won by our navy. [Loud cheers.]

The plans and specifications for the great fortifications of Talcahuano are finished and for the new forts of Valparaiso, as well as those necessary for the defense of Pisagua and Iquique. Several excellent guns have been placed in position at Valparaiso and Talcahuano, which, together with the heavy calibers now being especially constructed at the Krupp foundry, will make unassailable those ports by any squadron coming to the Pacific Ocean.

The building of dry-docks which was contemplated by the previous administrations has been undertaken by the present one. The Chilean fleet will soon have a fit place for every kind of work or repairs needed without going abroad.

The torpedo system of defense has been materially improved, the old vessels have been repaired, first-class light-houses have been established and erected, and schools afloat have been created for the instruction of the mariners. The Naval School building

has been finished. Several apprenticeship commissions have been sent to Europe.

The plans for the port of Llico have been already finished, and show that it will be most likely one of the best in the world.

The codification of the laws has attracted the closest attention from the Balmaceda administration. The Code of mines has been promulgated; that of civil procedure is about ready, and steps have been taken toward the completion of the code of criminal proceedings.

A vigorous prosecution of the public works has been a characteristic feature of the present administration.

Over a thousand kilometers of railways are in course of construction, in equal extent to what existed before 1886.

The great bridges over the Bio-bio river, the Laja, the Ñuble, and the colossal viaduct of the Malleco, and over thirty smaller bridges, have been completed.

Sixty fine school buildings are already finished with capacity for 23,300 pupils. There are eighteen jails, either finished or in course of construction, with capacity for eighteen hundred persons; six buildings for governors and *intendentes*; several Lyceums; three Normal Schools; an office for the Department of Public Works, and a suitable building for a School of Arts, besides others for the Military School; the Lyceum for girls at Valparaiso; the Merchants Exchange; one for the direction of primary education; a theatre for the Conservatory of Music; fourteen wharfs, the rest of the large mole of Valparaiso, besides other minor works.

We must bear in mind that all these buildings are substantial, fine structures, of solid materials, and creditable works of architecture.

As a complement of all these works stands the monument raised in Santiago in honor of science, and the canalization of the Mapocho river, a kind of gigantic work, enough to make immortal its author, in spite of the injustice of men. [Cheers.]

What shall I say now of the great projects resisted by a retrograde spirit of ignorance, by political antagonisms, or by obnoxious emulations?

I will keep silence about all that would have been done, and has not been accomplished, for reasons that may not prove credit-

able to the opponents of His Excellency, Señor Balmaceda, but that will do him honor.

Many Chiefs of States have tried to advance the material improvement of their countries, at the sacrifice of all or part of the citizens' liberties. Let us find out whether Señor Balmaceda has followed their example, or has, on the contrary, introduced reforms to protect the personal rights of every citizen.

It is not my purpose to dwell upon secondary subjects of reform undertaken by the public administration in codifications and the several branches of the government service to prove the spirit ruling their conduct; it will be enough to recall what has been done to secure the autonomy and independence of the public powers.

Everybody knows that the framers of the constitution of 1833 endeavored to organize a vigorous executive power to the injury and even nullification of the other constitutional powers of State. This administration has fixed exactly the boundaries of those powers. Their independence is the best guarantee of order and liberty under any government.

In order to organize upon solid foundations the legislative power, a bill was submitted upon parliamentary incompatibilities, the best that I know on the subject. To satisfy the scruples of the supporters of the measure things were probably carried beyond proper bounds, in order to increase the prestige of congress.

Esteeming as necessary to give the municipal power an autonomy compatible with our education, habits, and political and social standing, a bill was submitted to congress and approved, fixing the boundaries of the municipal power, and where its independent action begins.

When I mention this project I am far from referring to that famous contrivance of *autonomous wards*, an exotic plant, imported from countries with habits, education, and with a race different from ours. [Cheers.]

The judicial power has been for many years akin with the executive and under its intervention. This system has had serious difficulties and the opposition of statesmen. To correct evils endangering the independence and impartiality of the judges, a bill was approved, providing for the best means to avoid the evils brought about by the practice of popular elections of judges.

To avoid the want of a proper supervision of the several public offices, the law of incompatibilities on account of relationship was enacted.

What shall I say now about the respect shown by this administration for the rights of our citizens? This consideration has been carried to fatal extremes. An excessive indulgence has permitted, unawares, without anticipating the consequences, that the violent storm, sweeping now over the northern provinces of the country, would have been prepared in the very bosom of our National representation. [Well! True!]

The liberty of the press has been no liberty, but the worst kind of licentiousness. As by a flood, everything has been carried down and nothing has been respected.

We have seen the way in which individual liberties have been respected.

Who has been persecuted before the 7th of January last? I ask, which citizen has been subjected to duress before the revolutionary hydra had raised its monstrous heads in this country of peace and common-sense?

Public meetings were freely held, until a few hours before the uprising of the naval squadron, when the tempest was already raging, and ample facilities allowed, even to the inconvenience of free transit and commerce.

We reach now the subject of the electoral liberty, the idol raised by the revolutionists to fascinate the incautious, and to throw gold-dust in the eyes of those forgetful persons unacquainted with the history of our public men.

Electoral liberty is a goddess which has received every kind of incense and worship from the opposition side; but whenever the Government has tried to submit this adoration to a practical test, the goddess has been trampled down in contempt. I do not mean to say that during this administration the electoral liberty has been secured. No. But it is a fact, admitted by the promoters of the revolution, that the freest elections of all that have ever been held in Chile have taken place under the present government. The leader of the conservative party, who, in his supreme vanity, from his seat in the senate, called to an account all the presidents of Chile, stated that the only free elections in our country had been held under the presidency of Señor Lillo, Minister

of the interior. Who was at the head of the government at that time? His Excellency Señor Balmaceda. Therefore the electoral liberty has been the subject of exceptional considerations in our political history.

The elections of 1888 were presided over by representatives of the same political groups now engaged in the ranks of the revolution. Whatever they say will work against them.

When the parliamentary majority thought of finding in a law of *autonomous wards* the surest guarantee of a free vote, the president of the republic accepted the rule, in order to avoid conflicts and show his spirit of forbearance, although convinced that the prevailing electoral practice would not suffer the least alteration.

What else could be said in favor of so generous ideas? The electoral liberty will never be secured by means of speeches, nor laws or regulations. It depends on the political education of the people, on his relative aptitude to conduct public affairs, and on his ability to appreciate the meaning and influence of the popular suffrage in the welfare or misfortune of the country. To attain this desirable end in Chile, I consider necessary the diffusion of popular education and the industrial progress. The former secures the independence of our spirits, the latter that of our persons.

From what I have said of our administration in connection with public works, political reforms, and respect to our rights, we may safely come to the conclusion that there is not the slightest reason for this abrupt interruption of half a century of constitutional order and thirty years of domestic peace.

We have to look back elsewhere for the secret source of this tragedy.

The causes of the revolution are either imaginary or real; the former intend to make proselites, among those who are apt to judge by appearances without going to any depth in political subjects—moved by the impression of the moment upon their nerves or fancies [cheers]; gilt images thrown to the people as the ideal of hypocritical fancies. [Loud cheers.]

The other, the real and true *causes*, are thoroughly well known to all of us, having taken sides in the political contentions of the last period. We have often sounded their consciences down to bottom and felt bound to silence much of what we found out, in

order to keep the parties in harmony, and not to widen any more the existing wounds, and really because we never thought possible this sad tragedy of blood, death, and shame, such as is being enacted in Chile at present. [Cheers all around.]

We must talk plainly. It is time for all of us, who have taken any part in the present affairs to show our souls and our consciences as they are, and not as they ought to be. [Well, very well.]

IMAGINARY CAUSES are the electoral liberty, already mentioned, and the parliamentary liberty. Hearing what has been claimed by the press and by all the centres of opposition, in every possible strain, that the parliamentary liberty had been assailed, persons unacquainted with our affairs should take for granted that an 18 Brumaire has been reproduced in Chile, or that His Excellency, Señor Balmaceda, had attempted, before the 7th of January last, anything against the representatives of the people or their free deliberations. Nothing of the kind has happened. Freedom of speech has been carried, during the sessions of Congress, to extremes never known before in parliamentary history. Just like a sea without shores. From the chief of the nation down to the lowest public officer, everybody has been the subject of the vilest and worst qualifications.

As there exists not an instance, before the 7th of January, of any attempt against the persons of the representatives of the people nor the liberty of speech, we have to look elsewhere for the meaning of these alleged trespasses of the Chief Magistrate against parliament.

The contention may be reduced to very few words: THE ALLEGED RIGHT OF CONGRESS TO INTERFERE IN THE FORMATION OF THE MINISTRIES OF THE EXECUTIVE POWER.

The leaders of the opposition themselves admit that such a power is not vested in congress by the constitution. They admit, likewise, as they could not well fail to do, that section 6 of Article 73 of the Constitution enacts, among the other powers of the President of the republic, that of APPOINTING AND REMOVING AT WILL THE MINISTERS OF THE GOVERNMENT. As there is no possible ground for their assumption in the letter of the constitution, these famous politicians, from the Mapocho river, have tried to draw most sophistic conclusions from the plain spirit of our fundamental

law, in order to give an imperative character to practices and to customs of very doubtful existence, that could only be enforced according to the rules of our jurisprudence.

I am conversant with the archives of our political history, as I am bound, as a professor on this branch, to examine thoroughly the history of the constitution of Chile, and I have found incontestable reasons in documents, sufficient to measure the real value of the interpretations of the revolutionists, claiming the necessary interference of congress in the organizations of cabinets, and in the policy they are bound to adopt. In one word, the error comes from the mistaken idea that our constituent congress meant to establish with us the English parliamentary system. The chief of the nation, always ready on his part to accept every possible way of preserving a good harmony among the fundamental powers, has held that it is his privilege to appoint his own ministers, and that the constitution allows no direct interference of parliament or anyone else, which would in any way impair the free exercise of his functions, as president of the republic.

Who is right, the president or the old parliamentary majority?

Before finding the above-mentioned documents, I had been paralogized, when I published one of my first works on political science.

When the grand constituent convention was called to enact our fundamental charter, in one of the first sessions held, a committee was appointed with the especial object of presenting a draft of the constitution to be submitted as a basis of further debates.

Among the members of that committee the illustrious patrician, Don Mariano Egaña, was very prominent. He had been brought up and imbued with political English theories, which he wished, at all events, to implant in Chile, such as the parliamentary system existing for so many years in England. All his endeavors failed in the committee, and, as a sequel, two different drafts were submitted to the convention—one from the committee proper, and the other contained in vote of Don Mariano Egaña in particular.

Not discouraged by defeat in the committee, Señor Egaña insisted in the adoption of the English system, and he continued making preparations to secure his success in the grand convention. He met with disappointment, and his basis of parliamen-

tarism were one after the other expressly and emphatically rejected by the convention.

My honorable colleagues are all well aware that the cardinal bases of the parliamentary system are, 1st, the right of the sovereign to close the popular branch, as the only means to settle the conflicts between the executive and legislative powers; 2d, the irresponsibility of the head of the nation; 3d, a parliament composed of two houses, of which one must be of members appointed by the people and the other of permanent members for life and hereditary; 4th, the express power of parliament to inquire into the official conduct of all public functionaries.

Señor Egaña, as a leading and sound statesman, presented his system with every one of its characteristic features. The legislative power was to be composed of a popular house, such as that of the Commons in England, and of a senate, as the House of Lords, but only composed of fourteen members, elected indirectly by restricted votes, and composed of a chief-justice, the ex-presidents of the republic, the arch-bishops and bishops, the older councillors of state, and the superintendents of public instruction.

The convention rejected that kind of organization.

Señor Egaña proposed, as one of the powers of the president of the republic, "to dissolve the house of representatives, whenever very grave circumstances so demanded it, in the judgment of the council of state by the vote of two-thirds of its members.

The convention rejected the attribution.

Señor Egaña proposed, moreover, with a view to strengthen the powers of congress by article 61 of his draft, that "the senate and house of representatives may at any time—

"1st. Show the president of the republic their desire to adjust the peace. 2d. Ask him to examine the conduct of any public functionary, who does not properly discharge his duties, and to dismiss or suspend him, so as to have him tried and punished according to law."

This proposition was also rejected by the convention.

Señor Egaña, with a view to strengthen the supervising powers of congress, proposed that the senate ought to appoint yearly two of its members "to visit the provinces of the republic and to examine in their visit—

"3d. The observance of the laws.

“ 4th. The official conduct of the public functionaries.

“ 7th. The inversion of the public and municipal revenues.

“ Art. 70. The visiting senators will follow the instructions of the senate, but without any other power than that of taking notice and advice and request the action of the proper authorities.

“ Art. 71. The senate will meet on the first day of May for the sole purpose of receiving and examining the reports of the visiting senators.”

This plan was likewise rejected by the convention.

In Señor Egaña's draft nothing is stated in a direct manner about the responsibility of the president.

The great convention, on their part, made it explicit and in a direct way in article 71 of our fundamental law.

What do all these historic documents and these incontrovertible evidences show ?

Who is right according to them ? Where is the power or the right of the parliamentary majority to launch the country into a revolution, under the pretext that the president of the republic does not acknowledge in congress a power, not given by the letter of our constitution, and that the history of the same shows it was expressly refused by the constituent convention of 1833 ?

How could our future generations justify a revolution based upon false interpretations of the constitution ?

After these antecedents, it will not be to anticipate the verdict of history to hold that history will consider a crime of treason to the country the attempt of the majority of congress. [Cheers.]

If the founders of our constitutional regimen should rise from their tombs, we are sure they would contemplate with painful feelings of regret, that their work, intended to strengthen the principle of authority in the executive power, had become a standard of anarchy and disorder, through serious equivocations and misinterpretations.

Who is not aware of the fact that, according to the constitution of 1833, there is only one public power, well-armed and well-constituted ?

➤ Who does not know that the same constitution of 1833 made of the executive power almost an omnipotent dictatorship ?

And who does not know that the programs of all political parties, during the last thirty years, intend particularly to limit the powers of the president of the republic ?

And, if that is all true, how is it possible that the parliamentary majority may have held at the last hour, when there has been no change of the constitution, and as pretext for the revolution, that the system of the constitutional government of Chile had given to congress the total sum of the public power, and converted the chief of the nation into a figure-head, only fit to sign acts and resolutions, planned, dictated and inspired by others?

When I maintain the authority and powers granted by the constitution and the principles of political science to the chief of the nation, especially so in an elective and democratic republic, I am far from believing that congress ought not to have also ample powers for the exercise of its sovereign functions.

I do not wish any personal nor collective despotisms for my country. I want a government adjusted to the principles of political science and to common-sense. I want a government exercised by the high political powers, clearly and distinctly defined, with functions, privileges, rights, and duties characteristic and unmistakable. Here is what constitutes the representative system properly, and what I pursue to be the fairest aim of my aspirations.

What the opposition has wanted in Chile, in making a revolution under the standard of parliamentary liberty, is to plagiarize the conduct of the English parliament, when, in the face of an undisguised tyranny, that paid no respect to any rights or personal guarantees, carried their energy and patriotism to wage a war without quarter against John Lackland, succeeded by the execution of Charles the First and the dethronement of James the Second. But the opposition party forgets that when the English people, more than the parliament, rose, to a man against those monarchs, it was to defend their innate rights, their most precious guarantees, and not on account of legal interpretations, contrary to history, and to the letter and spirit of the rules in point.

To stimulate public imagination and to assume a justification, not in the least in existence, it has been necessary to invent in this peaceful country a new John Lackland, a Charles the First, and a James the Second.

The scheme might produce only fits of laughter in normal times but it brings us now real sorrow and deep pain. [Cheers.]

After what has been stated, we may weigh exactly the nature of the serious crime of the majority of the late congress, when, in

order to impose their unconstitutional theories, carried their impudence to omit the appropriation laws in such a manner and to an extent without parallel in the history of the world from the very origin of the representative system.

I do not consider the present occasion fit to examine the reach, intent, and scope of all these acts, their legality or justice, inasmuch as the subject has been thoroughly elucidated before. But after this reminiscence of the past I may be permitted to recall a fact which will fully confute the theories of the late congress, luckily for Chile, out of existence now.

The committee which prepared the draft of the constitution, to be discussed in the great convention, embraced the appropriation and revenue laws, authorizing the collection of taxes and fixing the naval and land forces AMONG THE EXCLUSIVE POWERS OF CONGRESS.

The honorable house knows that in these exclusive powers of congress the president of the republic has nothing to do ; cannot interpose his VETO, and the resolutions are carried out without any further requisites. The great convention eliminated these constitutional laws from the exclusive powers of congress, and introduced them among those in common with the other laws in which the president of the republic intervenes in concurrence with the legislative power. As that is so, what was the right of the majority of the senate and house of representatives to put off these vital laws, alleging that they were of the exclusive and direct power of congress? Why did they oppose to the very foundations of the constitution, its legal history, and the truth upon which it rests?

From the analysis I have made, Mr. President, it is evident that the *imaginary causes* of the revolution are unconstitutional, or founded on false assumptions and simple pretexts to cover veiled purposes to work on the fancies of those Chileans who may be found to be carried by superficial visions of vivid imaginations. [Cheers.]

Let us abandon the field of appearances for that of realities ; let us give up the world of illusions and deal with the miseries crowding fast around us.

Since the *imaginary causes* of the revolution have not stood the test of a fair logic and reasoning, let us deal now with the TRUE CAUSES. They are only two : AMBITION OF POWER in some,

and PERSONAL INTERESTS in others. That is the bare truth. That is what remains of the illuminated divinity, when we take off the mask which covers the human frailties.

AMBITION and PERSONAL INTEREST.

It is sad to say so, but it is the truth.

To show, beyond dispute, that the secret motive of many of the revolutionists is their ambition for power, it will be enough to sketch very superficially the causes which have produced the formation and fall of the seven ministries which, as magic shades, have succeeded each other, during the term of the present administration.

I have stated that when His Excellency Señor Balmaceda came to power he hoisted the white flag, symbol of peace, before the tents of all the political combatants.

To make practical his plan of government, in spite of the desperate efforts of the circles, which carried him to the presidential chair, he placed at the head of his first cabinet Don Ensebio Lillo, a political gentleman without enemies, respected and loved by all parties, free from ambitious views. With other peace liberals there were two nationalists in this cabinet.

When congress opened the extra sessions of 1886, the liberal dissenters and the government liberals joined in a coalition with the conservatives, in order to pass an indirect vote of censure against the cabinet. The standard hoisted, at that time, by the dissenters was the alleged need of checking the preponderance of the nationalists. The latter rose to power, and the former, the liberals, fell. The evil had to be stopped. Chile was sinking.

These and many other allegations were brought forward through the press, congress, and political rings.

His Excellency Señor Balmaceda, following his policy of pacification of the liberal ranks, without breaking from the groups which helped his election, organized the ministry of Señor Antunez, composed of peaceful men free from political hatred.

The struggle between liberal dissenters and conservatives against nationalists did not stop for an instant. While the former went against the government party in order to break it, the latter kept strengthening more and more the relations with the liberals in sympathy with the administration, so as to gain strength and to be enabled to resist the combat.

While the political circles kept their wrangles, the chief of the nation followed, with wonderful perseverance, his plan of union of the liberal party. As the contending parties wanted the help of the president to reach their ends, they kept flattering him with professions of attachment and admiration. Any other head, less conversant with the human heart, might have been turned.

A moment came when His Excellency President Balmaceda thought that it was the right time to accomplish his favorite work of reconciliation. To that end he organized the Zañartu ministry, composed of important members of the three leading political groups, viz., government liberals, liberal dissenters, and nationalists.

It was publicly admitted that this cabinet was a portent of reciprocal kindness, fidelity, and abnegation. It might have answered for that famous penalty applied to parricides by the Roman law. [Laughter.]

This union lasted until the benefit of government's ascendance could be utilized for the electoral campaign of 1888. Then the rupture came, for want of accord in the cabinet, for the appointment of a successor to one of the ministers, who resigned for reasons unconnected with politics.

The nationalists wanted the restoration of the old union, without liberal dissenters or radicals. The latter, on their part, preferred the sacrifice of their representation in the government, at expense of depriving their opponents of any influence in the administration.

The president, unwilling to incline the balance one way or the other, organized a cabinet exclusively with government liberals, without giving any participation to the contestants. That was the last of Troy. In public the liberal dissenters and the nationalists supported the government eloquently, but in the intimacy of their party the nationalists sought an occasion to undermine the ministry, relying on the support of a score of liberals, who were in favor of the nationalists rather than for their own party. The liberal dissenters, in their turn, kept fanning the fire of discord, so as to open a chasm between them and the nationals.

The bomb-shell exploded then, and in a party meeting vigorous hostilities began between the cabinet of Señor Cuadra and the nationalists and their converts. The struggle continued unabated

and the question on examinations followed and brought down the ministry.

His Excellency Señor Balmaceda, in such an emergency, anticipating the evils of the present discord, tried still to restore goodwill and harmony amongst the several political circles, and called Señor Barros Luco to form a cabinet in order to facilitate the restoration of peace.

Several members who accompanied Señor Barros Luco endeavored to bring back the nationalists to side with the cabinet. Jealousies, however, sprang among the dissenters and they did not hesitate to join hands in the senate with the nationalists, their bitter enemies, and with the conservatives, in order to oppose a barrier to the election of a president. The cabinet resigned.

The chief of the government was surprised to discover this alliance, and there was no other way left him than trying his best way for a fusion of liberals, radicals, and dissenters in a new cabinet.

A memorable struggle followed between the new ministry and the nationalists. During the ordinary session of 1889 there was no law approved, nor anything else done, than adding fuel to the political discords.

This period coincides with the campaign opened by the liberals within the cabinet, and the nationalists outside, against the candidacy of the distinguished statesman Don Enrique S. Sanfuentes.

It will be useless to recall the incidents and changes produced by this candidature, called official by its opponents, and an endless talk to enter into the details of the jealousies, combinations, intrigues, and perfidious schemes displayed against Señor Sanfuentes.

There were at that time very comical incidents, like that of a minister who, before taking the oath of office, went to the candidate to offer his *unsolicited* support, which was not accepted. And this minister, who appears to-day among the political Vestals, who have revolted the naval forces against the government under their ardent zeal in favor of law and electoral liberty, changed of mind very soon, and instead of supporting any one else's candidacy proclaimed his own.

Taking as a pretext the candidature of the great patriot Señor Sanfuentes, some of the ministers were found to be secret oppo-

nents of their chief, going to the extent of employing unworthy machinations, and hurting, indeed, the dignity of the president of the republic.

That cabinet fell, and before a new one was organized we were astonished to find out that a pact of union had been concluded between the nationalists and their converts, on one side, and on the other the liberal dissenters and the radicals, who only a few hours before had been trying to do each other every harm possible.

This fact will be sufficient to estimate the standard of morals existing among the several factions now engaged in the revolution.

Those events coincide with the formation of the sixth group which left the rank of the government liberals, in order to oppose the candidature of Señor Sanfuentes.

The house will not find strange the sudden formation of several parties, for I think it is difficult to find a parallel of what we see now in Chile in any other well-organized country with any kind of political training.

In England, France, and the United States, Belgium, Italy, and in every other well-organized country, parties are formed according to the ideas and high social or economical interests, and reflecting national aspirations, or at least those of a considerable portion of the people.

It was reserved to the majority of the last congress, this abnormal formation of as many different parties as portfolios in the administration.

In the presence of this parliamentary chaos, the president of the republic, as the innocent victim of so many ambitious and opposite political interests, did not hesitate to form a new ministry, in which all the political groups, surrounding the administration like stormy clouds, would be represented.

The Donoso ministry sprung from this clash, and was converted into a field of Agramonte, as could not be expected otherwise. It fell under the masked and unmasked attacks and machinations of all parties aspiring to exercise a direct influence in the next presidential election.

The president, finding it impossible to continue his administration, while surrounded by so many heterogeneous elements, called Señor Ibañez to form a cabinet, expecting to avoid the impending

conflicts between the executive and legislative powers. It was useless; the organs of the press of the several groups made a violent and bitter simultaneous onslaught on the new cabinet in terms derogatory indeed of our social culture and standing.

As the tempest did not subside, and the parties, far from coming to terms, kept kindling the fire of civil discord, the chief of the nation had to appeal to the well-known patriotism of Señor Sanfuentes, who did not hesitate for a moment to withdraw his name from the presidential election. In order to make more practical his step, he accepted, towards the end of last May, the portfolio of the Interior.

Inasmuch as this alleged official candidature was the only pretext of the opposition party, the president thought that the cause once removed, everything had been settled—a painful deception. As soon as Señor Sanfuentes appeared in congress, a vote of censure was proposed without even hearing his ministerial program. A poor reward for his most patriotic abnegation.

I believe there is not, in the parliamentary history of any civilized country, a case of more disrespectful contempt against the head of a government.

From that moment a conflict sprung between the congress and the executive power and lasted for several months. I do not intend to describe the sad sequel of antagonisms, violences, and slanders offered by the parliamentary majority, since that time, against the minority and the president of the republic. An impeachment of the cabinet on political grounds was talked over, as the proper means to compel the chief of the executive to resign.

An hour later of common-sense brought about the conciliating minority of Señor Prats. It was, however, to no purpose in the midst of the passions and distrust of their political supporters.

What will be the use of a mention of the Vicuña and the Godoy cabinets? The honorable house knows too well the meaning of these two last ministries, which have attended to the development of the revolution, but if there is any desire to know the purposes of the political circles, towards the end of the Prats cabinet, I may be permitted to say what is well known to all my honorable colleagues. As soon as the meetings of the chief tax-payers had been held, and the large majorities had appeared decidedly in favor of the administration, the parliamentary majority fully

anticipated their inevitable defeat in the next national elections. In order to avoid it, they had no other way left than to seize the power and, through the *intendentes* and governors of their affiliation, to obtain a preponderance that they could not well secure by any fair means.

It is hardly possible to trace to this political manœuvre the source of the present conflict.

A bare exposition of the ministerial changes will be more than sufficient to show, that one of the two principal factors of the revolution has been the ambition of political aspirants of all denominations.

It is a humiliation, derogatory of the national dignity, to discover that every change of cabinet has been brought about by political reforms, in the several programs of the parties, and not by any real differences on the ground of economical or social principles. They have all been influenced by petty passions.

The traditional ideas represented by the political parties have never been duly respected when effecting these several new combinations and alliances. How often we have seen confounded and in close consortship Voltaire and St. Thomas! How often have we attended in the morning to the wedding of these political groups and before the evening to the trial of their divorce.

The second and true source of the revolution, as I have insinuated before, is that of personal interests.

When our victorious army conquered, at the price of their blood, the Tarapaca territory, who could have imagined for a moment that the great wealth discovered there was to be, in a short time, an incentive to disturb the traditional peace of Chile and endanger our credit and our national integrity?

I am, Mr. President, one of the persons cowardly assailed and slandered by political adversaries, in their vain endeavor to dishonor men who have been, during their whole lifetime, in the service of the country, and who feel proud of their poverty.

I belong to the political party charged by the revolutionists, in their incendiary publications, as being an anonymous copartnership to profit by the use of the public moneys.

Who says so? Those who appear to work under engagements with the glittering producers of the Tarapaca staples.

What has been the influence of the Tarapaca nitrate kings in

our parliamentary wranglings, and in our political affairs, for the last five years ?

Is the president a victim, or not, of his energetic, straightforward conduct, displayed in defence of the interests of the northern provinces of the country ?

I leave the answer to the consciences of my honorable colleagues and to the sensible men of Chile.

Every Chilean congress, from 1810 to 1888, may not have been provided with a vast political stock of knowledge, may not have been conversant with every principle of political science, and may have opposed ideas truly beneficial ; but every one of those congresses has a claim to national gratitude for two great virtues, of which they must be proud, as being the secret of the Chilean greatness : their honesty and their patriotism. [Loud cheers.]

Could the members of the majority of the late congress boast alike of the same virtues ?

What must be the shame of the nation, on ascertaining that the same interests, which have contributed to throw us into a revolution, are, at the present time, knocking at every door in foreign countries to bring us into discredit, and to dishonor our foreign affairs.

Let us turn the page, Mr. President, out of self-respect.

Let us hypothetically accept that His Excellency Señor Balmaceda was guilty of the errors charged to him. Even in such an event this revolution could find no plausible apology now or hereafter.

The Balmaceda administration will come to an end on the 18th of next September, so that the civil war has commenced just about the expiration of his term; when ready to lay his conduct before the country, and await their verdict and the judgment of the high court designated, by the constitution, to pass sentence in his case.

Let us lay it in the scales ; on one side the few months left to the Balmaceda government, and on the other the endless ruin and disasters of the revolution.

It is impossible, absolutely impossible, that the present or future generations may justify the conduct of the authors of the present revolution.

Under the best aspect of things, the revolutionists have no

chance to escape an unqualified reprobation on all sides. [Cheers.]

If, from the above inquiry into the origin of the disturbance, we proceed to examine the advisability of the revolution itself, we will discover new reasons to condemn it.

What power has congress to authorize the revolt of the national men-of-war? No word of the constitution could be found on this subject.

The right of insurrection is denied by the majority of statesmen and publicists, but I believe that there is such a right.

While the people is a victim of a tyrant, who tries to usurp power and perpetuate himself in it, or of one who has obtained the power through violence, and becomes an implacable despot, the people has a perfect right to take the redress in his own hands, and only then and there a man will be great and the Brutus of a revolution.

This supreme right, however, for a people groaning under oppression, this last life-preserver of citizens under the yoke of a usurper, is not to be delegated or vested in any of the constitutional powers; it is to be wielded only by those who assume their original sovereignty—the national sovereignty. [Cheers.]

No publicist, nor any one possessing the least idea of political science, will ever hold that the right of revolution may be delegated by the people, and still less into any of the public powers, which, by their own nature, are bound to perform functions of order only, organized, as they are, to preserve order and prevent anarchy.

The majority of the late congress, however, not only has usurped a pretended right entirely beyond its powers, but has delivered the same into the hands of an institution which, according to the notions of that same majority, became unconstitutional from the first of January last.

It is no less astonishing the conduct observed by almost the whole of the members composing the majority of the late congress. Instead of facing the danger of the situation in the battle-fields, they fly away and disperse themselves, when they do not keep in close concealment, going to foreign countries to await the result, and ready to return home in case of success, so as to take their share in the spoils of the conquerors. [Loud cheers.]

Instead of making a show of mercy and tolerance, as was to be expected, they give a character of implacable ferocity to their

war. They were the first to throw torpedoes on a defenceless transport before it was fitted up for war; they have pillaged and set on fire populations, as their ways of hostilities. The towns of Iquique and Tarapaca have been laid waste in part; they have, with stoical indifference, contemplated numerous families with their children, dragging a wretched existence, on board launches to escape their fury, and left unpunished the vile murder of Colonel Robles, who, after long hours of combat and being twice badly wounded, went in quest of help to take refuge in an ambulance.

That is what they do while under arms. Outside the provinces, under their rule, they keep bribing, stimulating treason by dint of gold, distributing proclamations in the military head-quarters, inciting the soldiers to murder their officers, and throwing explosive bomb-shells to destroy a respectable and innocent family at home.

They think they are popular; so they say everywhere that the country is with them. They are, on the contrary, bound to conquer, as strangers and enemies, every inch of the ground they tread upon. The people remain perfectly indifferent, turning a deaf ear to their entreaties and threats.

From 1851 to 1859 every capital of a province, every centre or town, rose in arms, and there was hardly a portion of the country which did not take up arms.

To-day the conflict is limited to the places invaded by the fleet. And it must be borne in mind that the Chileans, when touched in their rights and liberties, know how to be irresistible in their defence.

If there were any doubts, before the last elections, about which is the will of the majority of the people, there is no room for any now. The so-called delegation of congress bears their precarious existence only through force and by force.

The delegation has not escaped the consequences of their rashness and want of knowledge of the human heart.

The chief of the revolutionary squadron initiated the revolt, as a blind instrument in the hands of congress, and as an humble, modest servant of one of the public powers of the nation. Times and events went on, and very soon the delegates, who acted kings, became the subjects now, and go around to do as directed by the chief of the fleet, who seems to have acted the part of the Pope Sixtus the Fifth, very poorly dressed and humble, until he secured the chair of Peter.

The revolutionary press, having made a change of front, pretends to justify the revolution, not on the former grounds of parliamentary rights, but on account of the measures of repression adopted, after the beginning of the revolution, to oppose and defeat it, as well as to preserve order and prevent its spreading, and to save the country from its sure ruin, if ever the principle of authority were to succumb in Chile.

In blaming the government for these repressive measures, the revolutionists lose sight of their own conduct with their prisoners and the public functionaries who have fallen in their hands. Our officers and superior public functionaries are held in the lower holds of their vessels, and submitted to the severest kind of durance.

The revolution with all its danger, and the intervention of the majority of congress, a body called by our fundamental charter to invest the executive with extraordinary powers, compelled the president of the republic to assume the necessary authority to save the country.

On the inauguration of the present constituent congress, their first duty is to approve these acts, as dictated under the extraordinary pressure of an armed revolution.

Extraordinary powers to preserve public order, when disturbed, are granted by the constitution of every country.

It is to be regretted to have to delegate that amount of public power; but public order stands above every other consideration, as the chief foundation of rational liberty and political and individual guarantees.

I feel convinced that there is not one member in the government, the constituent congress, or the administration, who is not painfully afflicted at the condition of Chile since the 7th of last January.

I am very sure my colleagues, like myself, while left to our own thoughts and meditations, feel the weight and misery of this calamity.

The country, from one end to the other, deplores a conflict which throws a dense shade on our glorious past, and soils laurels of victory dear to every Chilean.

In spite of every difficulty which may oppose us, we must lay down the foundations of a system of government, making forever

impossible the anarchy of errors, false interpretations, or omissions in our constitution. Let us improve by the experience and lessons of our present misfortunes, and that will be sufficient to make the work of the constituent congress beneficial and lasting.

Chile, Mr. President, goes up the mountain, this time, with a heavy cross on her shoulders. The distance to be made yet is considerable. There is no lack of prophets portending endless evils against our future greatness. They have visions only of the tomb in contemplation, none of the resurrection.

That reminds me of Prometheus; urged by his ambition, he tried to scale the heavens and seize the secret of life. In punishment he was enchained and placed on top of the Caucasus, while hungry vultures kept forever devouring his entrails.

Chile, Mr. President, has perhaps anticipated her times, and, inspired by the noble emulations of progress, has attempted sudden conquests that have required centuries of struggles, labor, and vicissitudes among other nations; and then destiny or fatality stops her flight of eagle, and brings vultures to devour her proud heart.

But, sir, the hero of the fable was at last saved by a Titan.

The present generation, or the next, I am sure—I think I perceive it in the midst of this manly people—used as we are, all the Chileans, to the school of misfortunes and to bear our former poverty, will break the present chains all around and, without a cross or internecine wars, Chile will reach her great destinies of power, greatness, and glory. [Cheers.]

[The deputies rushed to the seat of the orator to offer their congratulations.]



