POLITICAL CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF CHILE: PROMULGATED MAY 25, 1833, WITH THE AMENDMENTS DOWN TO MAY 1, 1899

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Political constitution of the Republic of Chile: promulgated May 25, 1833, with the amendments down to May 1, 1899 by $\,$ Various

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POLITICAL CONSTITUTION

OF THE

REPUBLIC OF CHILE

PROMULGATED

May 25, 1833

WITH THE

AMENDMENTS

DOWN TO

MAY 1, 1899

TRANSLATED BY

C. W. TOOKE

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THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC.

Whereas the Grand Convention has sanctioned and decreed the following reform of the Political Constitution of Chile promulgated in 1828, which the National Congress has attested in the following terms:

In the name of God, the All-powerful Creator and Supreme Legislator of the Universe.

The Grand Convention of Chile called by the law of October 1, 1831, to change and make additions to the Political Constitution of the Nation, promulgated August 8, 1828, after having examined that Code and adopted those of its institutions believed to conserve the prosperity and good government of the State, having modified and suppressed other provisions, and having added such other provisions as it deemed especially suitable to promote the same important end, decrees: that, the provisions therein are repealed, and that the following constitute the Political Constitution of the Republic of Chile.

CHAPTER L. THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT.

ARTICLE 1.

The Government of Chile is popular and representative.

ARTICLE 2.

The Republic of Chile is one and indivisible.

ARTICLE S.

The sovereignty resides essentially in the Nation, which delegates its exercise to the authorities established by this Constitution.

CHAPTER II. RELIGION.

ARTICLE 4.

The religion of the Republic of Chile is the Apostolic Roman Catholic; to the exclusion of the public exercise of any other.*

The law of July 27, 1855, explanatory of this article, provides that members of other denominations may worship in churches owned by private individuals and associations, and may found and sustain private schools for the promulgation of their

CHAPTER III.—CITIZENS OF CHILE.

ARTICLE 5.

The following are Chileans:

- 1. Those born within the territory of Chile.
- 2. Those born of Chilean parentage in foreign territory, upon the event of becoming domiciled in Chile. The children of Chileans born in foreign territory, while the father is in the actual service of the Republic, are Chileans for all intents and purposes for which the fundamental laws, or any others, require nativity in Chilean territory.
- Those of foreign birth who, having resided one year in the Republic, declare before the municipal authorities of the district in which they reside their desire to become domiciled in Chile and shall ask for papers of naturalization.
- Those who obtain an especial grant of naturalization by an act of Congress.

ARTICLE 6.

Those persons who have not been born in Chile must make their declaration upon oath before the municipality of the department of their residence in accordance with section three of the preceding article, and in no case can naturalization be obtained contrary to the rule prescribed by that section. Upon the registration of the favorable decision of the municipality, the President of the Republic will issue the proper naturalization papers.

Античь 7.

Those male Chileans shall exercise the right of suffrage who have reached the age of twenty-one years, are able to read and write, and have been duly inscribed in the electoral register of the department.

The names of those registered shall be published and they shall continue electors for the period fixed by law.

The registration will continue in force and will not be suspended unless in the writ which promulgates the law of elections.

ARTICLE 8.

The privilege of citizens to exercise the right of suffrage shall be suspended for the following causes:

- Physical or moral incapacity which interferes with the free and reasonable use of the faculties.
 - 2. The condition of domestic service.
- Prosecution for a crime which merits corporal or infamous punishment.

ARTICLE 9.

Citizenship is lost for the following causes:

- 1. Condemnation to corporal or infamous punishment.
- Fraudulent bankruptcy.
- 3. Naturalization in a foreign country.

Acceptance of employment, office or salary from a foreign government, without special permission of Congress.

Those who from any one of the causes enumerated in this article have suffered the loss of citizenship, may regain their rights by act of the Senate.

CHAPTER IV. PUBLIC GUARANTEES OF CHILE.

ASTICLE 10.

The Constitution guarantees to all inhabitants of the Republic:

- 1. Equality before the law. In Chile no class privileges exist.
- Admission to all public employments and offices without other conditions than those prescribed by law.
- 3. The equal distribution of imposts and taxes in proportion to property and the equal distribution of all other public charges. A special law will determine the method of raising recruits and of enrolling substitutes for the land and naval forces.
- 4. The liberty of sojourn in any part of the Republic, of removal to any other part, of departure from its territory, respecting however the regulations of police and saving always of injury to other parties; provided that no person shall be arrested, fined or exiled except according to the forms prescribed by law.
- 5. The inviolability of all property without discrimination, whether belonging to individuals or corporations; and no one shall be deprived of his ownership of the same or of any part thereof, however small, or of any right therein, except by virtue of a judicial decision; save when the interests of the State, specified by law, shall require the use or expropriation of the same; provided that in such cases previous indemnification shall be made to the owner either by agreement with him or by valuation made by a jury of competent men.
- The right to assemble without previous permission and without arms. Meetings held in squares, streets and other public places shall always be subject to the police regulations.

The right to form associations without previous permission.

The right to present petitions to the properly constituted authorities on any subject of public or private interest has no limitation than that of using peaceful and proper terms in its exercise.

The liberty of instruction.

7. The liberty of publishing one's opinions through the press, without previous censorship; and no one shall be condemned for abuse of the right except by virtue of a judgment by a jury after testimony has been given of the said abuse, and after trial and sentence according to law.

CHAPTER V.-THE NATIONAL CONGRESS.

ARTICLE 11.

The legislative power is vested in the National Congress, composed of two chambers, one of Deputies, the other of Senators.

ARTICLE 12.

The deputies and senators are inviolable for the opinions expressed and the votes cast by them in the discharge of their duties.

ARTICLE 13.

From the day of his election, no senator or deputy shall be accused, prosecuted, or arrested, except when taken in flagrante delicto, unless the chamber of which he is a member shall previously authorize the prosecution by declaring that there is ground for bringing the action.

ARTICLE 14.

From the day of his election, no deputy or senator shall be prosecuted except before the chamber of which he is a member, or before the Executive Committee, if the chamber be not in session. If it be declared that there is ground for bringing the action, the accused shall be suspended from his legislative functions, and subjected to the proper tribunal.

ARTICLE 15.

In case any deputy or senator shall be arrested in flagrante delicto, he shall be placed immediately at the disposition of his own chamber or of the Executive Committee, upon summary information. The chamber or the committee shall thereupon proceed according to the method stated in the second part of the preceding article.

THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES.

ARTICLE 16.

The Chamber of Deputies shall be composed of members elected from the departments by direct vote in the manner determined by the law of elections.

ARTICLE 17.

One deputy shall be elected for each thirty thousand inhabitants and for each fraction not below fifteen thousand.

If a deputy shall die or be removed by the chamber for any cause during the first two years of his term, a new election shall be held to choose his successor in the manner and time prescribed by law.

A deputy who loses his representative character by resignation or by accepting an incompatible office shall not be re-eligible at the next renewal of the chamber.

ARTICLE 18.

The Chamber of Deputies shall be totally renewed every three years.

ARTICLE 19.

The qualifications for eligibility to the office of deputy are:

- 1. Possession of the rights of a citizen elector.
- 2. An annual income of at least five hundred pesos.

ARTICLE 20.

Deputies are eligible for re-election indefinitely.

ARTICLE 21.

The following persons are ineligible to the office of deputy:

- 1. Priests in regular standing, rectors and vice-rectors.
- Judges of the superior courts and of the courts of the first instance, and those officers engaged in the public administration.
 - 3. Intendents of the provinces and the governors of departments.
- Persons held as security upon contracts for public works or under any kind of legal bond.
- Chileans mentioned in paragraph three of article five, unless they have been in possession of their naturalization papers at least five years prior to their election.

The office of deputy is gratuitous and is incompatible with municipal office and with any remunerative employment, function or commission. One elected must choose between the office of deputy and the employment, function or commission in which he is serving within fifteen days if within the territory of the Republic, or within one hundred days if he is absent. The time must be reckoned from the date of the approval of the election. Upon failure to make the declaration of his choice within the required period the person elected forfeits his right to the office of deputy.

No deputy from the moment of his election and until six months from the termination of his office can be nominated to any remunerative public function, commission or employment.

This provision does not obtain in case of foreign war nor does it extend to the offices of President of the Republic, cabinet minister, or diplomatic agent, but only those offices conferred during the state of war and that of cabinet minister are compatible with the functions of deputy.

No deputy while in the exercise of his office can make the contracts indicated in section four of this article or become security thereon. If the disqualification mentioned in section one should arise, the office of deputy thereby becomes vacant.

THE SENATE.

ARTICLE 22.

The Senate shall be composed of members elected by direct vote from the provinces, each of which may choose one senator for every three deputies or fraction of two deputies.

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