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The Marshall Plan and American aid to Europe, which do not affect Switzerland directly, have for her both favourable and unfavourable aspects. By furthering the economic development of the countries hit hardest by the war and enabling them to rehabilitate and improve their means of production, the Plan abolishes the privileged situation we have enjoyed since the end of the war. We are already witnessing and shall certainly witness in ever increasing measure, the return of competition on the markets of the world. We shall have to adapt ourselves to more normal conditions than those by which we have profited during the last three years.

However, there is another side to the matter. American aid is bringing a flow of dollars and gold to Europe. This wealth is being caught up in the economic process and the recipient countries have now increased possibilities in the sphere of bilateral trade. There can be no doubt that we are benefiting thereby. Thanks to American aid, certain difficulties on the bilateral level can now be solved to the advantage of export trade, tourist traffic and money transfers. It is certain that without American aid the economic position of our European partners would have continued to deteriorate, this in its turn leading to a progressive shrinkage in our commercial exchanges with them and to considerable damage to our export trade. Free competition in a healthy Europe is better than a virtual monopoly in a stricken one.

## SWISS FEDERALISM.

(Continued).

The people as a whole, as well as the cantons, are responsible for the election of the legislature, i.e. the Federal Assembly. One of the two chambers, the National Council, is representative of the people and is, by the constitution, so elected that there is one National Councillor for every 22,000 citizens, each canton, even the smallest, having a representative. Every canton forms an electoral area. At the elections to the National Council held in Autumn, 1943, 194 members were elected. Out of a population of 4.26 million, it was calculated that 1,300,784 were eligible to vote. The seats were then, as the law prescribes, allocated among the parties according to the strength of their polls. The present National Council, which remains in office till the end of 1951, comprises 44 Catholic Conservatives, 52 Radicals, 7 Liberal Conservatives, 21 members of the Party of the Citizens' Farmers and Artisans, 48 Social Democrats, 8 members of the National Ring, 5 of the Democratic party, 7 of the Party of Work (Communists) and 2 with no affiliation.

The second chamber, called by the old cantonal name of Council of States, is elected, according to cantonal legislation, by elections in the Cantons or by the cantonal authorities. It consists of 44 members, which means that each canton has two seats. Three cantons have been divided by Federal law into half-cantons each, Unterwalden, by a very old tradition into Obwalden and Nidwalden, Appenzell into Catholic Inner Rhodes and Protestant Outer Rhodes, and Basle, after the