

POLITICS OF THE DAY.

Mr. C. J. Ingersoll, a representative in Congress from the Third District of Pennsylvania, and one of the most radical politicians in the country...

"Come we now to the consideration of the first of Mr. Ingersoll's grave charges against the Whig party in Congress, to which we are the more disposed to pay attention...

Is the "right of debate" to which a Representative in Congress is entitled, a right to debate unlimitedly? or is it a right subject to such restrictions as will prevent its defeating the paramount right of the Representative to vote?

The limitation of the length of speeches is a rule which, in one form or other, must exist in all popular assemblies, whether primary or representative.

ter from the sort of opposition it encounters, of Whig origin, or even of modern date. It was the custom in the Athenian assemblies (judges as well as legislators) to limit the speakers to a particular portion of the time...

But, Mr. Ingersoll says, the one-hour rule is "absurd." In what respect? The effect is, we admit, sometimes ludicrous, when, in the midst of a florid harangue, a Member is brought to a sudden stop by the expiration of his hour.

But, after racking his imagination for an hour, he has not been able to find a single instance in which the one-hour rule has been violated. Mr. Ingersoll gives consolation for himself and his associates, under the pressure of these dire calamities, in the future of the Whigs to accomplish one measure which they had much at heart.

num cost of speeches is brought down to three hundred and thirty-three dollars each. Even this reduced expenditure for speeches, considering the quality of some of them, most of our readers will regard as "paying dear for the whistle."

We have not been able to comprehend upon what ground it is that those who declaim against the new rule represent it as particularly oppressive upon the minority. Does it make any distinction in favor of the majority? Does it not, on the contrary, operate upon all Members alike?

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to principle in our Government, as it exists, and as it has been exercised. We cannot, however, leave wholly unimproved a fair opportunity for expressing our general views of it.

The Veto, by which is denoted the power given by political institution to an individual to defeat the resolution of a deliberative body, is, in its present form, a solecism in our system of Government. Its incorporation in the Constitution appears to have been an error of judgment in its founders, who, designing it as a guard against the excesses of Democracy, have, by the introduction of this single feature, established for us almost a Monarchy under the name of a Republic.

These are almost the very terms used in the "Federalist" in vindication, or rather in palliation, of this feature of the Constitution—the Veto power not being so much attempted to be justified by that work, as to be excused. "It will not be too strong to say [see Federalist, No. 68] that there will be a constant probability of seeing the station of President filled by characters [meaning Gen. Washington] pre-eminently able and virtuous; and this [having such a man as General Washington for President] will be thought no inconsiderable recommendation of the Constitution by those who are able to estimate the share which the Executive in every Government must necessarily have in its good or ill administration."

"This power and other powers entrusted to the first President were exercised by him with forbearance and discretion, we need not remind any reader. Mr. Ingersoll himself adverts to the remarkable fact, that although the power of recommending measures to Congress is almost imperatively conferred upon the President, he was so deferential to the wisdom and patriotism of the Representatives of the People, that in his first Message to Congress he made no specific recommendation whatever. With respect to the Veto power, how reluctant Gen. Washington was to exercise it every one knows who has read the history of the establishment of the first Bank of the United States.

In planting this Veto power in the Constitution, most members of the Convention thought they were planting a guard against the excesses of Democracy, and a check upon the Executive power. But, after racking his imagination for an hour, he has not been able to find a single instance in which the one-hour rule has been violated.

ing of history arises from the conviction forced upon us that the worst vices of Governments have risen from the corruption of conservative institutions. Amongst the best of the ancient Governments, there was no one instance in which the final issue was not the acknowledged rule of one Man; by whatever title, Monarch in fact.

Such was the issue of "the great tribulation potentiality" which was established in the Roman Republic, not, as Mr. Ingersoll would have his readers believe, as a safeguard against "dictation" by the People, (or the People's Representatives,) but directly the reverse, to protect the People against the tyranny of hereditary rulers; being as different as possible in its inception and its effect from the Veto in our Constitution, which is placed there not to give effect to the will of the People, but to defeat it, at the will or pleasure of "one man," elevated above the People, acting upon his sole responsibility. The history of the tribulation Veto, so exultingly referred to by Mr. I. was briefly this: After expelling their Kings, the Romans instituted the Consular Government, which, under another name, was a disguised monarchy, consisting of two annually elected Consuls, with a hereditary Senate, and some municipal authority left with the People, rather to flatter and amuse than to protect them from power.

To come down to more modern ages, English history has shown most conclusively the omnipotence of real power over external forms. The monarch of the British Empire, with fleets and armies at his command, his person sacred by the laws, and clothed by the same laws with the Veto power absolute, what is in reality the British Sovereign? A Pageant made to utter words and to act as directed by the real masters. But neither the Pageant or its directors have dared for more than a century to pronounce the "I forbid" to the Legislative body. If this terrific term rose to their tongue, it died away on their lips: the real, we might say the inherent, power frowned and overawed the outward legal form.

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our Constitution, the great danger, as experience has already shown us, is not so much of its being used to prevent the passage of any particular law as of its being so used as effectively to concentrate in the hands of the President the Legislative (the Initiative) as well as the Executive power. The reality of this danger was demonstrated under the Administration of Gen. Jackson. It is further illustrated in the state of things at this moment, which Mr. Ingersoll exults in, and which we most sincerely regret.

This is entirely wrong; or, if right, it proves beyond question that the Veto principle cannot be too soon stricken out of the Constitution. "All Legislative powers heretofore granted," says the Constitution, "shall be vested in a Congress of the United States," and "the Executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States." By the term "legislative," is intended "law-making"; by "executive," is (see Dr. Johnson) "active; not deliberative; not legislative; having the power to put in act the laws." The Executive is not a part of the Legislature of the United States, as was most exceptionally intimated, for the first time, in one of President Van Buren's Messages to Congress. All Legislative power is vested in Congress; which Congress, says the Constitution, "shall consist of [not the President and] a Senate and House of Representatives." The Veto power is, it is true, given to the President, but it is given to be exercised in cases admitting of no reasonable doubt, either as to constitutionality or expediency, such for example as that of an attempt to pass a bill to suspend the writ of habeas corpus; a bill respecting an establishment of religion; a bill of attainder; or a bill to do anything forbidden by the Constitution.

This is our theory in reference to the Veto Power. "It is a power, in our opinion, susceptible of great abuse; and, even upon our own construction of it, limiting its exercise to extreme cases, it is a useless excrescence on the Constitution, the power of the Judiciary being as effective and as instant as the Executive Veto to remedy any abuses of Legislative authority.

Whist, however, the Veto power exists, it must be admitted that it is right in the Executive to put his negative upon any bill in regard to which, in the language of Mr. Jefferson's Letter of advice to President Washington, his mind is, "tolerably clear that it is unauthorized by the Constitution." We therefore acquiesce deferentially in this exercise of the Veto in the case of the first Bank bill of the last session, on the ground of the President's declaration of his solemn conviction of its unconstitutionality; nor are we disposed to question his right to veto the second on the same ground. Our conviction is not the less firm that his view of his duty in both cases was erroneous.

Such was the opinion of President Madison before the Supreme Court had passed judgment upon the question of the constitutional power of Congress to establish an incorporated bank as solemnly and deliberately as it has since done. He considered the question, even then (in 1815) precluded by repeated recognitions, by the Legislature, the Executive, and finally by the Judiciary, of the validity of such an institution. [See his Message to the Senate Jan. 30, 1815.] Since that day the judgment of the Supreme

Court has been equally clear, and the Veto power has been exercised upon the same principle. It is not the less firm that his view of his duty in both cases was erroneous. He acted, conscientiously in doing what he did. We are equally conscientious in the opinion that he might, without violating either his oath or his duty, have acted otherwise.

and nobly realized their most exalted hopes. Guarded by every human precaution from the approaches of party spirit, it has ever preserved its purity even while the pestilence of faction was raging all around. Commended to the understanding and endeared to the affections of a free and enlightened People by a faithful, able, temperate, and unimpeachable exercise of powers of the sublimest comprehension; to Mr. Ingersoll and his party belongs the irreverent originality of scoffing at this High Court, and striving, vainly indeed, to expose its august functions to public ridicule and contempt.

We have neither time nor room here to expatiate upon the constitutional powers and duties of the Supreme Court, nor to expose the heresies in relation thereto which have been so industriously and artfully disseminated by certain of the political leaders and party-preses of the day. Whatever may be the "dogmas" of the Whig party with regard to those powers, they are all resolvable to that great and leading tenet, the supremacy of the laws. Beyond this they have never stretched. Short of it they can never be restricted.

In conclusion: Mr. Ingersoll closes his Address by saying that "the Winter of our [the Opposition's] discontent has passed away during a Summer Session, and Spring opens upon the Fall Elections with all its reviving promise." We can hardly hope to rival our author's flights of fancy. Much it we follow them at long distance. Let us try our wing, however, thus: Of so surprising a dance of the Seasons as the Spring opening upon the Fall "with all its reviving promise," the natural consequence would seem to be that Fall, with all its fading tints, its portentous gloom, its gathering clouds and rising storms, will be precipitated upon the Spring. The hopes of Locofocoism, revived by recent occurrences, may exhibit here and there some buds of promise; but blossoms in Autumn are out of the order of Nature, and he who counts upon fruit from them is destined to disappointment. These untimely flowers may hang out their fluttering hues, and cluster "with all their blushing honors thick upon them." But "the third day comes a frost, a nipping frost!" Instead of furnishing bright garlands for the brow of victorious Locofocoism, the Autumn flowers will be driven from their stems by the wintry winds, and all the plains be strewn with these withered emblems of hopes revived only to be blighted.

RAILWAY AND STEAM-POWER 3,600 YEARS AGO.

The lost Arts of the Ancient Egyptians.—If the Thebans 1800 years before Christ, knew less in some departments of useful knowledge than ourselves, they also in others knew more. They possessed the art of tempering copper tools so as to cut the hardest granite with the most minute and brilliant precision. This art we have lost. Again, what mechanical means had they to raise and fix the enormous imposts on the lintels of their temples at Karnae? Architects now confess that they could not raise them by the usual mechanical powers. These means must, therefore, be put to the account of the "lost arts." That they were familiar with the principle of Artesian wells has been lately proved by engineering investigations carried on while boring for water in the great oasis; that they were acquainted with the principle of the railroad, is obvious, that is to say, they had artificial causeways, levelled, direct and grooved, (the grooves being aointed with oil) for the conveyance from great distances of enormous blocks of stone, entire stone temples, and colossal statues of half the height of the monument. Remnants of iron, it is said, have lately been found in these grooves. Finally, M. Arago has argued that they not only possessed a knowledge of steam power, which they employed in the cavern mysteries of their Pagan free-masonry, (the oldest in the world, of which the pyramids were the lodges), but that the modern steam engine is derived, through Solomon de Caus, the predecessor of Worcester, from the invention of Hero, the Egyptian engineer.

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