Soba Catrup

EASTON GAZETTE.

WHERE THE PRESS IS FREE—"Literature well or ill-conducted, is the Great Engine by which all Popular States must ultimately be supported or overthrown
RELIGION purifies the Heart and teaches us our Duty—Morality refines the Manners—Agriculture makes us Rich, and Politics provides for the enjoyment of all.

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ADVERTISEMENTS

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Speech of Mr. Webster.

Delivered at the Odeon, Oct. 12, 1835, on the presentation of a silver vase by the citizens of Boston.

Mr Chairman and Gentlemen:—I accept, with grateful respect, the present which it is your pleasure to make. I value it. It bears an expression of your regard for those political principles which I have endeavored to maintain, and tho' the material were less costly, or the workmanship less elegant, any durable evidence of your approbation could not but give me high satisfaction.

This approbation is the more gratifying, as it is not bestowed for services connected with local questions, or local interests: or which are supposed to have been peculiarly beneficial to yourselves, but for efforts, which had the interests of the whole country for their object, and which were useful, if useful at all, to all who live under the blessings of the constitution and government of the United States.

It is twelve or thirteen years, gentlemen, since I was honored with a seat in congress by the choice of the citizens of Boston. They saw fit to repeat that choice, more than once; and I embrace, with pleasure, this opportunity of expressing to them my sincere and profound sense of obligation for these manifestations of confidence. At a later period, the legislature of the state saw fit to transfer me to another place; and have again renewed that trust; under circumstances which I have felt to impose on me new obligations of duty, and an increased devotion to the political welfare of the country. These twelve [illegible], gentlemen, have been years of labor, and not without sacrifices, but both have been more than compensated by the kindness, the good will, and the favorable interpretation with which my discharge of official duties has been received. In this changing world we can hardly say that we possess what is present, and the future is all unknown.—But the past is ours. Its acquisitions, and its enjoyments are safe. And among these acquisitions, among the treasures of the past most to be cherished and preserved, I shall ever reckon the proofs of esteem and confidence, which I have received from the citizens of Boston and the legislature of Massachusetts.

In one respect, gentlemen, your present oppresses me. It overcomes me by its tone of commendation. It assigns to me a character of which I feel I am not worthy. "The defender of the constitution" is a title quite too high for me. He who shall prove himself the ablest among the able men of the country, he who shall serve it longest among those who may serve it long, he on whose labors all the stars of benignant fortune shall shed their selectest influence, will have praise enough, and reward enough, if, at the end of his political and earthly career, though that career may have been as bright as the track of the sun across the sky, the marble under which he sleeps, and that much better record, the grateful breasts of his living countrymen, shall pronounce him "the defender of the constitution." It is enough for me, gentlemen, to be connected, in the most humble manner, with the defence and maintenance of this great wonder of modern times, and this certain wonder of all future times. It is enough for me to stand in the ranks, and only to be counted as one of its defenders.

The constitution of the United States, I am confident, will protect the name & the memory, both of its founders and of its friends—even of its humblest friends. It will impart to both something of its own ever memorable and enduring distinction.—I had almost said something of its own everlasting remembrance.—Centuries hence, when the vicissitudes of human affairs shall have broken it, if ever they shall break it, into fragments, every shattered column, every displaced foundation stone, shall yet be sure to bring them all into recollection, and attract to them the respect and gratitude to mankind.

Gentlemen, it is to pay respect to this constitution—it is to manifest your attachment to it—your sense of its value, and your devotion to its true principles, that you have sought this occasion. It is not to pay an ostentatious personal compliment. If it were, it would be unworthy both of you and of me. It is not to manifest attachment to individuals, independent of all considerations of principles—if it were, I should feel it my duty to tell you, friends as you are, that you were doing that, which, at this very moment, constitutes one of the most threatening dangers to the constitution itself. Your gift would have no value in my eyes—this occasion would be regarded by me as an idle pageant, if I did not know that they are both but modes, chosen by you, to signify your attachment to the true principles of the constitution—your fixed purpose, so far as in you lies, to maintain those principles, and your resolution to support public men, and stand by them, so long, and no longer, than they shall support and stand by the constitution of the country—"The constitution of the country!"

Gentlemen, often as I am called to contemplate this subject, its importance always rises and magnifies itself, more and more, before me. I cannot view its preservation as a concern of narrow extent, or temporary duration. On the contrary, I see in it a vast interest, which is to run down with the generations of men, and to spread over a great portion of the earth with a direct, and over the rest with an indirect, but a most powerful influence. When I speak of it here, in this thick crowd of fellow citizens and friends, I yet behold, thronging about me, a much larger & more imposing crowd. I see a united rush of the present and the future. I see all the patriotic of our land, and our own time, I see also the many millions of their posterity, and *I* see, too, the lovers of human liberty, from every part of the earth—from beneath the oppression of thrones and hierarchies, and dynasties—from amidst the darkness of ignorance, degradation and despotism, into which any ray of political light has penetrated—I see all those countless multitudes gather about us, and I hear their united and earnest voices, conjuring us, in whose charge the treasure now is, to hold on, and hold on to the last, by that which is our own highest employment, and their best hope.

Filled with these sentiments, gentlemen, and having, through my political life, hitherto, always acted under the deepest conviction of their truth and importance, it is natural that I should have regarded the preservation of the constitution as the first great political object to be secured. But I claim no exclusive merit. *I* should deem it especially, unbecoming and unjust in me, to seperate myself, in this respect from other public servants of the people of Massachusetts. The distinguished gentlemen who have preceded and followed me, in the representation of the city, their associates from other districts of the state; and my late worthy and most highly esteemed colleague, are entitled, one and all, to a full share in the public approbation. If accidental circumstances, or a particular position, have sometimes rendered me more prominent, equal patriotism and equal zeal have yet made them equally deserving. It were invidious to enumerate these fellow-labourers, or to discriminate among them. Long may they live! and *I* could hardly express a better wish for the interest and honor of the States, than that the public men, who may follow them, may be as disinterested, as patriotic, and as able as they have proved themselves.

There have been, gentlemen, it is true, anxious moments. That was an anxious occasion, to which the gentleman who has addressed me in your behalf, has alluded; I mean the debate in January, 1830. It seemed to me then that the constitution was about to be abandoned. Threatened with most serious dangers, it was not only not defended, but attacked, as *I* thought and weakened & wounded in its vital powers and faculties, by those to whom the country naturally looked for its defence and protection.—*It* appeared to me that the union was about to go to pieces, before the people were at all aware of the extent of the danger. The occasion was not sought, but forced upon us; it seemed to me momentous, and I confess that I felt that even the little that I could do, in such a crisis, was called for by every motive which could be addressed to a lover of the constitution. I took a part in the debate, therefore with my whole heart already in the subject, and careless for every thing in the result, except the judgment which the people of the U. States should form, upon the questions involved in the discussion. I believe that judgment has been definitely pronounced; but nothing is due to me beyond the merit of having made an earnest effort to present the true question to the people, and to invoke for it that attention from them, which its high importance appeared to me to demand.

The Constitution of the United States, gentlemen, is of a peculiar structure.—Our whole system is peculiar. It is fashioned according to no existing model, likened to no precedent, and yet founded on principles, which lie at the foundation of all free governments, wherever such governments exist. It is a complicated system. It is elaborate, and in some sense, artificial, in its composition. We have twenty four state sovereignties, all exercising legislative, judicial, and executive powers. Some of the sovereignties, or states, had long existed, and subject only to the restraint of the power of the parent country, and been accustomed to the forms and to the exercise of the powers of representative republics. Others of them are new creations, coming into existence only under the constitution itself; but all now standing on an equal footing.

The general government under which all States are united, is not, as has been justly remarked by Mr. Gray, a confederation. It is much more than a confederation. It is a popular representative government, with all the departments, and all the functions and organs of such a government. But it is still a limited, a restrained, a severely guarded government. It exists under a written Constitution, and all that human wisdom could do, is done, to define its powers, and to prevent their abuse. It is placed in what was supposed to be the safest medium between dangerous authority, on the one hand, and debility and inefficiency on the other. I think that happy medium was found, by the exercise of the greatest political sagacity, and the influence of the highest good fortune.—We cannot move the system either way, without the probability of hurtful change and as experience has taught us its safety and its usefulness, when left where it is, our duty is a plain one.

It cannot be doubted that a system thus complicated, must be accompanied by more or less of danger, in every stage of its existence. It has not the simplicity of despotism. It is not a plain column, that stands self poised and self supported. Nor is it a loose, irregular, unfixed and undefined system of rule, which admits of constant and violent changes, without losing its character. But it is a balanced and guarded system: a system of checks & controls; a system, in which powers are carefully delegated, and as carefully limited; a system in which the symmetry of the parts is designed to produce an aggregate whole, which shall be favorable to personal liberty, favorable to public prosperity, and favorable to national glory. And who can deny, that by a trial of fifty years, this American system of government has proved itself capable of conferring all these blessings?

These years have been years of great agitation, throughout the civilized world. In the course of them the face of Europe has been completely changed.—Old and corrupt governments have been destroyed, and new ones, erected in their places, have been destroyed too, sometimes in rapid succession. Yet through all the extraordinary, the most extraordinary scenes of this [illegible] representative government of the United States has stood, and has afforded security for liberty, for property, and for reputation to all its citizens.

That it has had many dangers, that it has met critical moments, is certain. That it has now dangers, and that a crisis is now before it, is equally clear, in my judgment. But it has hitherto been preserved, and vigilance and patriotism may rescue it again.

Our dangers, gentlemen, are not from without.—We have nothing to fear from foreign powers, except those interruptions of the occupations of life which all wars occasion. The dangers to our system as a system, do not spring from that quarter. On the contrary, the pressure of foreign hostility would be most likely to unite us, and to strengthen our union, by an augmented sense of its utility and necessity. But our dangers are from within. I do not now speak of those dangers which have in all ages beset republican governments, such as luxury among the rich, the corruption of public officers, and the general degradation of public morals. I speak only of these peculiar dangers to which the structure of our government particularly exposes it, in addition to all ordinary dangers.—These rise among ourselves, they spring up at home, and the evil which they now threaten is no less than disunion, or the overthrow of the whole system. Local feelings, and local parties, a notion sometimes sedulously cultivated, of opposite interests, in different portions of the union, evil prophecies respecting its duration, cool calculations upon the benefits of separation, a narrow feeling, that cannot embrace all the states as one country, an unsocial, anti national, and half-belligerent spirit, which sometimes betrays itself,—all these undoubtedly are causes which affect more or less, our prospect of holding together. All these are unpropitious influences.

The constitution, again, is founded on compromise, and the most perfect and absolute good faith, in regard to every stipulation of this kind contained in it, is indespensable to its preservation. Every attempt to accomplish even the best purposes, every attempt to grasp that which is regarded as an immediate good, in violation of these stipulations, is full of danger to the whole constitution. I need not say also, that possible collision between the general and state governments, always has been, is, and ever must be, a source of danger to be strictly watched by wise men.

But, gentlemen, as I have spoken of dangers now, in my judgment, actually existing, I will state at once my opinions on that point, without fear and without reserve. I reproach no man, I accuse no man; but I speak of things as they appear to me, and I speak of principles and practices, which I deem most alarming. I think, then, gentlemen that a great and practical change is going on in the constitution which, if not checked must completely alter its whole character. This change consists in the diminution of the just powers of congress on the one hand, & in the vast increase of executive authority on the other. The government of the U. States, in the aggregate, or the legislative power of congress, seems fast losing, one after another, its accustomed powers. One by one, they are practically struck out of the constitution. What has become of the power of internal improvement? Does it remain in the constitution, or is it erased by the repeated exercise of the president's veto, and the acquiescence in that exercise, of all who call themselves his friends, whatever their own opinions of the constitution may be? The power to create a national bank—a power exercised for forty years, approved by all presidents, and sanctioned by congress at all times, and by a solemn adjudication of the supreme court—is it not true that party has agreed to strike this power too, from the constitution, in compliance with what has been openly called the interests of the party? Nay more, that great power, the power of protecting domestic industry, who can tell me whether that power is now regarded as in the constitution or out of it?

But if it be true, that the diminution of the just powers of congress, in these particulars, has been attempted, and attempted with more or less success, it is still more obvious, I think that the executive power of the government has been dangerously increased. It is spread, in the first place, over all that ground, from which the legislative power of congress is driven. Congress can no longer establish a bank controlled by the laws of the United States, amenable to the authority, and open, at all times, to the examination and inspection of the legislature.—It is no longer constitutional to make such a bank, for the safe custody of the public treasure. But of the thousand state corporations already existing, it is constitutional for the executive, as it pleases, to employ, without responsibility to their keeping, without responsibility to the laws of the United States. without the duty of exhibiting their concerns, at any time, to the committees of congress, and with no other guards or securities than such as executive discretion, on the one hand, and the banks themselves on the other, may think proper. [illegible] internal improvement. It is not every thing in the nature of public improvements, which is forbidden.—It is only that the selection of objects is not with congress. Whatsoever appears to the executive discretion to be of a proper nature or such as comes within certain not very intelligible limits, may be tolerated. And even with respect to the tariff itself, while as a system it is denounced as unconstitutional, it is probable some portions of it might find favor.

But it is not the frequent use of the power of the veto—it is not the readiness with which men yield their own opinions, and see important power practically obliterated from the constitution, in order to subserve the interest of party—it is not even all this, which furnishes, at the present moment, the most striking demonstration of the increase of executive authority. It is the use of the power of patronage, it is the universal giving and taking away of all place and office, for reasons no way connected with the public service, or the faithful execution of the laws—it is this which threatens all the true principles of the government. Patronage is reduced to a system. It is used as the patrimony, the property of party. Every office is a largess, a bounty, a favor; and it is expected to be compensated by service and fealty. A numerous and well-disciplined corps of office-holders, acting with activity and zeal and with incredible union of purpose, is attempting to seize on the strong posts, and to control effectually, the expression of the public will. As has been said of the Turks in Europe, they are not so much mingled with us, as encamped upon us. And it is lamentable, that the apathy which prevails in a time of general prosperity, produces, among a great majority of the people, a disregard to the efforts and objects of this well trained and effective corps.—But, gentlemen, the principle is vicious; it is destructive and ruinous, and whether it produces its work of dis union today or to-morrow, it must produce it in the end. It must destroy the balance of the government, and so destroy the government itself. The government of the United States controls the army, the navy, the custom house, the post-office the land offices and other great sources of patronage. What have the states to oppose to all this?—And if the states shall see all th patronage if they shall see every office under this government, in all its ramifications, united with every other office and all acting steadily in a design to produce political effect, even in state governments, is it possible not to perceive that they will ere long regard the whe government of the Union with distrust and jealousy, and finally with fear an hatred.

Among other evils, it is the tendency of this system to push party feelings and party spirit to their utmost excess. It involves not oy opinions and principles, but the ursuits of life and the means of living, the contest of party. The executive mself becomes but the mere point of oncentration of party power: and whe executive power is exercised, or is clmed for the supposed benefit of party, party will approve and justify it. When dul heated and exasperated party ever complain of its leaders for seizing on new extents of power.

This system of government has been openly avowed. Officers of trust are declared, from high places, to be the regular spoils of party victory, and all that is furnished out of the public purse, as a reward for labor in the public service becomes thus a boon, offered to personal devotion and partisan service. The uncontroled power of removal is the spring which moves all this machinery, and I verily believe the government is, and will be, in serious danger, till some check is placed on that power. To combine and consolidate a great party by the influence of personal hopes, to govern by the patronage of office, to exercise the power of removal at pleasure, in order to render that patronage effectual, this seems to be the sum & substance of the political systems of the times. I am sorry to say, that the germ of this system had its first being in the Senate.

The policy being in the last year of Mr. Adam's administration, when nominations, made by him to fill vacancies occuring by death or resignation, were postponed, by a vote of the majority of the Senate, to a period beyond the fourth of March then next; and this was done with no other view than that of giving the patronage of these appointments to the in coming President. The nomination of a judge of the Supreme Court, among others, was thus disposed of.—The regular action of the government was, in this manner deranged, and undue and unjustly obtained patronage came to be received as among the ordinary means of government. Some of the gentlemen who concurred in this vote, have since probably, seen occasion to regret it. But they thereby let loose the lion of executive prerogative, and they have not yet found out how they can drive it back again to its cage.—The debates in the Senate on these questions, in the session of 1828, 1829, are not public; but I take this occasion to say, that the minority of the Senate, as it was then constituted, juglin[illegible] against this innovation upon the constitution for days and for weeks; but we contended in vain.

The doctrine of patronage thus got a foot hold in the government. A general removal from office followed, exciting, at first, no small share of public attention; but every exercise of the power rendered its exercise in the next case still easier, till removal at will has become the actual system on which the government is administered.

It is hardly a fit occasion gentlemen to go into the history of this power of removal. It was declared to exist, in the days of Washington, by a very small majority in each house of Congress.—It has been considered as existing to the present time. But no man expected it to be used as a mere arbitrary power; and those who maintained its existence, declared, nevertheless, that it would justly become mattor of impeachment, if it should be used for purposes, such as those to which the most blind among us must admit they have recently seen it habitually applied. I had the highest respect for those who originally concurred in this construction of the constitution. But as discreet men of the day were divided on the question; as Madison and other distinguished names were on one side, and Gerry and other distinguished names on the other, one may now differ from either, without incurring the imputation of arrogance, since he must differ from some of them; and I confess my judgment would have been that the power of removal did not belong to the President alone, but it was but a part of the power of appointment, since the power of appointing one man to office, implies the power of vacating that office, by removing another out of it; and as the whole power of appointment is granted, not to the President alone, but to the President and Senate, the true interpretation of the constitution would have carried the power of removal into the same hands. I have, however, so recently expressed my sentiments on this point, in another place, that it would be improper to pursue this line of observation further.

In the course of the last session, gentlemen, several bills passed the Senate, intended to correct abuses, to restrain useless expenditure, to curtail the discretionary authority of public officers, and to control government patronage. The post office bill, the custom house bill, and the bill respecting the tenure of office, were all of this class None of them, however, received the favorable consideration of the other house I believe, that in all these respects a reform a real, honest reform, is decidedly necessary to the security of the constitution; and while I continue in public life, I shall not halt in my endeavors to produce it. It is time to bring back the government to its true character of an agency for the people. It is time to declare that offices, created for the people, are public trusts, not private spoils. It is time to bring each and every Department within its true original limits. It is time to assert, on one hand, to the just powers of Congress, in their full extent, and to resist, on the other, the progress and rapid growth of executive authority.

These, gentlemen, are my opinions. I have spoken them frankly, and without reserve. Under present circumstances, I should wish to avoid any concealment and to state my political opinions, in their full length and breadth. I desire not to stand before the country as a man of no opinions, or of such a mixture of opposite opinions, that the result has no character at all. On the contrary; *I* am desirous of standing as one who is bound to his own consistency by the frankest avowal of his sentiment, on all important and interesting occasions. I am not partly for the constitution, and partly against; I am wholly for it, for it altogether, for it as it is, and for the exercise when occasion requires, of all its just powers, as they have heretofore been exercised by Washington and the great men who have followed him in its administration.

I disdain, altogether, the character of an uncommitted man. I am committed fully committed; committed to the full extent of all that I am, and all that I hope, to the constitution of the country, to its law and revenue, to its defense and maintenance, to its warm commendation to every American heart, and to its vindication and just praise, before all mankind. And I am committed *against* every thing, which, in my judgment, may weaken, endanger, or destroy it. I am committed *against* the encouragement of local parties & local feelings; I am committed *against* all of fostering anti-national spirit; I am committed *against* the slightest infringement of the original compromise, on which the constitution was founded; I am committed *against* any and every derangement of the powers of the several departments of the government, *against* any derogation from the constitutional authority of congress, and especially *against* all extension of executive power; and I am committed *against* any attempt to rule the free people of this country by the power and the patronage of the government itself. I am committed fully and entirely committed, gentlemen.

These, gentlemen, are my opinions. I have purposely avowed them, with the utmost frankness. They are not the sentiments of the moment, but the result of much reflection, and of some experience in the affairs of the country. I believe them to be such sentiments as are alone compatible with the permanent prosperity of the country, or the long continuance of its Union.

And now gentlemen, having thus solemnly avowed these sentiment, and these convictions, if you should find me hereafter to be false to them, or to falter in their support, I now conjure you, by all the duty you owe your country, by all your hopes of her prosperity & her own, by all your love for the general cause of liberty, throughout the world—I conjure you, that renouncing me as a recreant, you yourselves go on; right on—straight forward, in maintaining with your utmost zeal, and with all your power, the true principles of the best, the happiest, the most glorious constitution of a free government, with which it has pleased Providence, in any age, to bless any of the nations of the earth.

WHEAT—IMPORTANT DISCOVERY.

The New York Farmer publishes a letter from Rev Mr. Coleman, announcing an important discovery for the destruction of the grain fly.

The grain fly or insect, which, for a few years past has been destructive to wheat in many parts of the country, has this year extended its ravages, and excited wherever he made his appearance, very serious alarm. An eminent farmer in the State of New York wrote to me a year since, that he must give up the cultivation of wheat, as his crops were so much injured that he hardly obtained a return equal to the seed sown. I knew another instance in the same State where, though the straw was large and the appearance promising, yet from thirty bushels sown not more than seven were obtained. I have known other cases in which the whole field has been mowed and sold for litter; and in a recent excursion up the valley of the Connecticut, I have heard complaints everywhere, and seen hundreds and hundreds of acres so destroyed that the grain they would yield would hardly pay for reaping. Besides this, the same insect has destroyed many fields of rye in the same manner as the wheat, and had been found this year in the oats; the progress of the insect has been about forty miles a year; and a distinguished gentleman in Vermont, a practical and extensive farmer, remarked that he feared they would on this account be obliged to relinquish the cultivation of small grains.

The habit of the insects have not yet been accurately observed. I myself have not yet seen the fly, but have seen the worms in the kernel after the grain has been destroyed. He is represented as being a small redish fly, which is seen hovering over the wheat fields in immense numbers, while just in flower, and has been observed to alight upon the kernel or bud, to ascend it, and then descending in the inner side, to deposite his egg between the stalk and the kernel. I purposely avoid the use of all

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