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### COLUMBIA TELESCOPE, BY BULLARD & SWEENEY.

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#### THE BRIDAL DIRGE

The following "Bridal Dirge," though anonymous, is evidently from the pen of one of the first writers of the day.

The bride is dead! The bride is dead!  
Cold and frail, and fair she lies;  
Wrapped in she in gulfen lead,  
And a flower is at her head,  
And the breeze above her sighs,  
Thorough night and thorough day,  
'Fled away!—Fled away!

Once—but what can that avail—  
Once, she wore within her bosom  
Pity, which did never fail,  
A hue that faded the lily pale;  
And upon her cheek a blossom  
Such as yet was never known,  
—All is past and overthrown!

Monstrous the sweetest bride is dead,  
And her knight is sick with sorrow,  
That her bloom is 'lapped in lead,'  
Yet he hopes, fancy fed,  
He may kiss his love to-morrow,  
But the breeze?—what say they?  
'Fled away!—Fled away!

#### IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, May 4, 1920.

Mr. Benton, from the select committee, to which was referred the proposition to inquire into the expediency of reducing the patronage of the executive government of the United States, made the following report:

That after mature deliberation, the committee are of opinion that it is expedient to diminish, or to regulate, by law, the executive patronage of the federal government, whenever the same can be done consistently with the provisions of the constitution, and without impairing the proper efficiency of the government. Acting under this conviction, they have reviewed, as carefully as time and other engagements would permit them to do, the degree and amount of patronage now exercised by the President, and have arrived at the conclusion that the same may, and ought to, be diminished by law. For this purpose they herewith present to the senate six bills, entitled:

1. A bill to regulate the publication of the Laws of the United States, and of public advertisements.
2. A bill to secure in office the faithful collectors and disburses of the revenue and to displace defaulters.
3. A bill to regulate the appointment of Post Masters.
4. A bill to regulate the appointment of cadets.
5. A bill to regulate the appointment of midshipmen.
6. A bill to prevent military and naval officers from being dismissed the service at the pleasure of the President.

The committee do not doubt but that there are many other branches of executive patronage, in addition to those which are comprehended in the provisions of these bills; which might be advantageously regulated by law. Far from thinking that they have exhausted the subject, they believe that they have only opened it, and that nothing more can be done, at this time, than to lay the foundation of a system to be followed up and completed hereafter.

In coming to the conclusion that executive patronage ought to be diminished and regulated, on the plan proposed, the committee rest their opinion on the ground that the exercise of great patronage in the hands of one man, has a constant tendency to stultify the purity of our institutions, and to enlarge the liberties of the country. This doctrine is not new. A jealousy of power, and of the influence of patronage, which must always accompany its exercise, has ever been a distinguished feature in the American character. It displayed itself strongly at the period of the formation, and of the adoption of the federal constitution. At that time the febleness of the old confederation had excited a much greater dread of anarchy than of power—"of anarchy among the members than of power in the head"—and although the impression was nearly universal that a government of more energetic character had become indispensably necessary, yet even under the influence of this conviction—such was the dread of power and patronage—that the States, with extreme reluctance, yielded their assent to the establishment of the federal government. Nor was this the effect of idle and visionary fears on the part of an ignorant multitude, without knowledge of the nature and tendency of power. On the contrary, it resulted from the most extensive and profound political knowledge—from the heads of statesmen, unsurpassed

in any age, in sagacity and patriotism. Nothing could reconcile the great men of that day to a constitution of so much power, but the guards which were put upon it against the abuse of power. Dread and jealousy of this abuse displayed itself throughout the instrument. To this spirit we are indebted for the freedom of the press, trial by jury, liberty of conscience, freedom of debate, responsibility to constituents, power of impeachment, the control of the Senate over appointments to office; & many other provisions of a like character. But the committee cannot imagine that the jealous foresight of the time, great as it was, or that any human sagacity, could have foreseen, and placed a competent guard upon, every possible avenue to the abuse of power.—The nature of a constitutional act excludes the possibility of combining minute perfection with general excellence. After the exertion of all possible vigilance, something of what ought to have been done, has been omitted, and much of what has been attempted, has been found insufficient and unavailing in practice. Much remains for us to do, and much will still remain for posterity to do—for those unborn generations to do, on whom will devolve the sacred task of guarding the temple of the constitution, and of keeping alive the vestal flame of liberty.

The committee believe that they will be acting in the spirit of the constitution in laboring to multiply the guards, and to strengthen the barriers against the possible abuse of power. If a community could be imagined in which the laws should execute themselves—in which the power of government should consist in the enactment of laws—in such a state the machine of government would carry on its operations without jar or friction. Parties would be unknown, and the movements of the political machine would but little more disturb the passions of men than they are disturbed by the operations of the great laws of the material world. But this is not the case. The scene shifts from this imaginary region, where laws execute themselves, to the theatre of real life, wherein they are executed by civil and military officers, by armies and navies, by courts of justice, by the collection and disbursement of revenue, with all its train of salaries, jobs, and contracts; and in this aspect of the reality, we behold the working of PATRONAGE, and discover the reason why so many stand ready, in any country, and in all ages, to flock to the standard of roven wheresoever, and by whomsoever, it may be raised.

The patronage of the federal government at the beginning, was founded upon a revenue of two millions of dollars.\* It is now operating upon twenty-two millions, and, within the life time of many now living, must operate upon fifty. The whole revenue must, in a few years, be wholly applicable to subjects of patronage.—At present, about one half, say ten millions of it, are appropriated to the principal and interest of the public debt, which, from the nature of the object, involves but little patronage. In the course of a few years, this debt, without great mismanagement, must be paid off. A short period of peace and a faithful application of the sinking fund, must speedily accomplish that most desirable object. Unless the revenue be then reduced, a work as difficult in republics as in monarchies, the patronage of the federal government, great as it already is, must, in the lapse of a few years, receive a vast accession of strength. The revenue itself will be doubled, and instead of one half being applicable to objects of patronage, the whole will take that direction.—Thus, the reduction of the public debt, and the increase of revenue, will multiply in a four fold degree the number of persons in the service of the federal government, the quantity of public money in their hands, and the number of objects to which it is applicable; but as each person employed will have a circle of greater or less diameter, of which he is the centre and soul—a circle composed of friends and relations, and of individuals employed by himself on public or on private account—the actual increase of federal power and patronage by the duplication of the revenue, will be, not in the arithmetical ratio, but in geometrical progression, an increase almost beyond the power of the mind to calculate or to comprehend.

The committee think it right to attempt to give an idea of the greatness of this power of patronage by referring to an example in a single city. They will take the city of New York, and a single branch of the federal patronage in that city; and to avoid mistake or error, will limit their reference to a work of unquestionable authority upon this subject—the "Blue Book" of the Republic, which corresponds with the "Red Book" of monarchies, and will read from

\*From the 4th of March, 1789, to the 31st of December, 1811, a period of almost three years, the whole amount of the revenue of the federal government was only \$44,419,115.

pages 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, of that growing little volume.

(Here is inserted in the report a list of the names of officers attached to the customs of New York with the compensation to each.)

A formidable list indeed! formidable in numbers, and still more so from the vast amount of money in their hands. The action of such a body of men, supposing them to be animated by one spirit, must be tremendous in an election; and that they will be so animated, is a proposition too plain to need demonstration. Power over a man's support, has always been held and admitted to be power over his will.\* The President has "power" over the "support" of all these officers; and they again have "power" over the "support" of debtor merchants to the amount of ten millions of dollars *per annum*, and over the daily support of an immense number of individuals, professional, mechanical, and day-laboring to whom they can and will extend, or deny, a valuable private as well as public patronage, according to the part which they shall act in *State*, as well as in *Federal*, elections. Still this is only a branch, a mere prong, of Federal patronage in the city of New York. The same government has, in the same city, a branch of the United States Bank, wielding a capital of many millions; a large military, naval, and post-office establishment; a judiciary, with its appropriate officers; presses, which print the laws and public advertisements; and a long list of contractors and jobbers.

But it may be said that this is an extreme case; that New York is the first city in the Union, and Federal patronage necessarily the greatest there. Granted. Then go to the other extreme; take a borough town of comparatively small population, and an insignificant amount of revenue to collect; take Norfolk, with her white population of five thousand souls, and her net revenue of sixty-four thousand seven hundred and twelve dollars and twenty-seven cents, and see the power of patronage there.

(Here follows the names of officers attached to the customs of Norfolk with their compensations.)

Forty-one officers supported and employed by a single branch of Federal patronage in Norfolk to collect an annual revenue of \$64,712 27; a single branch, for this borough, also, has her navy yard, and military establishment; her judiciary, post office, presses, and the unknown and unknowable list of jobbers and contractors; and the still more inscrutable list of expectants, who are waiting for "dead men's shoes," and willing, in the mean while, to do any thing that the living men wish. The influence of such a body of men, animated by one spirit in an election, must be still more efficient in a borough town of five thousand souls, than the influence of a far greater number of Federal officers and retainers, in the far greater population of New York. And so throughout the Union.—Every where, to the extreme frontier of the remotest State or Territory, Federal patronage will be found in degree and force, proportionate to the population of the place, and forever augmenting with the increasing power of the Government. Diminution of patronage is not thought of in the state of the Custom House in Norfolk, is already pregnant proof of this. The power of patronage, unless checked by the vigorous interposition of Congress, must go on increasing, until Federal influence, in many parts of this Confederation, will predominate in elections, as completely as British influence predominates in the elections of Scotland and Ireland, in rotten borough towns, and in the great naval stations of Portsmouth and Plymouth. In no part of the practical operation of the Federal Government, has the prediction of its ablest advocates been more completely falsified, than in this subject of patronage.—The numbers 45 and 46 of the Federalist, were devoted to an enquiry into the comparative means of influence possessed by the Federal and the State Governments; and the superiority, at every point of the inquiry, was assigned to the latter. It will be useful to read a few passages from these numbers. Compared with the actual state of things, they will exhibit the difference which a few short years have developed, between the theoretical and the practical Government of this Union; and the thinking mind will be carried forward, by a natural impulsion, to contemplate the further differences which a few more years must uncover.

#### THE PASSAGE.

The powers delegated by the proposed constitution to the Federal Government, are few and defined; those which remain to the State Governments, are numerous and indefinite.

The number of individuals employed under the constitution of the United States, will be much smaller than the number employed under the particular States; there will consequently, be less of personal influence on the side of the former than the latter.

\*Federalist.

If the Federal Government is to have collectors of revenue, the State Governments will have theirs also; and as those of the former (the United States) will be principally on the sea coast, and not very numerous, whilst those of the latter (the States) will be spread over the face of the country, and will be very numerous; the advantage in this view also lies on the same side, (the side of the States.)

Within every district to which a Federal collector would be allotted, there would not be less than thirty or forty, or even more officers, of different descriptions (in the employment of the States,) and many of them persons of character and weight, whose influence would lie on the side of the State.

To be able to show to the Senate a full and perfect view of the power and workings of federal patronage, the Committee addressed a note, immediately after they were charged with this inquiry, to each of the departments, and to the post master general, requesting to be informed of the whole number of persons employed, and the whole amount of money paid out, under the direction of their respective departments. The answers received are herewith submitted, and made part of this report. With the Blue Book, they will discover enough to show that the predictions of those who were not blind to the defects of the Constitution, are ready to be realized; that the power and influence of Federal patronage; contrary to the argument in the "Federalist," is an overmatch for the power and influence of State patronage; that its workings will contaminate the purity of all elections, and enable the federal government, eventually, to govern throughout the States, as effectually as if they were so many provinces of one vast empire.

The whole of this great power will centre in the president. The king of England is the "fountain of honor;" the president of the United States is the source of patronage. He presides over the entire system of federal appointments, jobs, and contracts. He has "power" over the "support" of the individuals who administer the system. He makes, and unmakes them. He chooses from the circle of his friends and supporters, and may dismiss them, and upon all the principles of human action, will dismiss them as often as they disappoint his expectations. His spirit will animate their actions in all the elections to state and federal offices. There may be exceptions, but the truth of a general rule is proved by the exception. The intended check and control of the Senate, without new constitutional or statutory provisions, will cease to operate. Patronage will penetrate this body, subdue its capacity of resistance, chain it to the car of power, and enable the President to rule as easily, and much more securely with, than without, the nominal check of the senate. If the president was himself the officer of the people, elected by them, and responsible to them, there would be less danger from this concentration of all power in his hands; but it is the business of statesmen to act upon things as they are, and not as they would wish them to be. We must then look forward to the time when the public revenue will be doubled; when the civil and military officers of the federal government will be quadrupled; when its influence over individuals will be multiplied to an indefinite extent; when the nomination by the president can carry any man through the senate, and his recommendation, can carry any measure through the two houses of congress; when the principle of public action will be open and avowed, the president wants no vote, and I want no patronage; I will vote as he wishes, and he will give me the office I wish for. What will this be but the government of one man? and what is the government of one man but a monarchy?—Names are nothing. The nature of a thing is in its substance, and the name soon accommodates itself to the substance. The first Roman Emperor was styled Emperor of the Republic, and the last French emperor took the same title; and their respective countries were just as essentially monarchial before as after the assumption of these titles. It cannot be denied, or dissembled, but that this federal government gravitates to the same point, and that the election of the executive by the legislature quickens the impulsion.

Those who make the president must support him. Their political fate becomes identified, and they must stand or fall together. Right or wrong, they must support him; and if he is made contrary to the will of the people, he must be supported not only by votes and speeches, but by arms. A violent and forced state of things will ensue. Individual combats will take place; and the combats of individuals will be the forerunner to general engagements. The array of man against man will be the prelude to the array of army against army, and of state against state. Such is the law of nature; and it is equally in vain for one set of men to claim an exemption from its operation, as it would be for any other set to suppose that under the same circumstances they would not act in the same manner.—The natural remedy for all this evil would be to place the election of President in the hands of the people of the United States. He would then have a power to support him, which would be as able as willing to aid him when he was himself supporting the interests of the country, as they would be to put him down when he should neglect or oppose those interests. Your committee, looking at the present mode of electing the President as the principal source of all this evil, have commenced their labors at the beginning of this session by recommending an amendment to the constitution in that essential and vital particular; but in this, as in many other things, they find the greatest difficulty to lie in the first step. The committee recommend the amendment, but the people cannot act upon it until congress shall "propose" it, and, peradventure, congress will not "propose" it to them at all.

The committee have also reported another proposition of amendment, intended to exclude senators and representatives from appointment to civil offices, under the authority of the federal government; and this proposition they will not despair of seeing referred to the consideration and decision of the people. They believe that every provision to amend the constitution, not frivolous, or flagrantly bad on its face, should be referred to the people.—The people make the constitution and they can amend it. They are the only constitutional triers of the amendment. They alone have power to adopt it; and for Congress to refuse to propose the amendment, is to prevent decision, and to act upon the principle that the people are incompetent to decide.

The committee must then take things as they are. Not being able to lay the axe to the root of the tree, they must go to pruning among the limbs and branches. Not being able to reform the constitution in the election of president, they must go to work upon his powers, and trim down these by statutory enactments, wherever it can be done by law, and with just regard to the proper efficiency of the government. For this purpose they have reported the six bills which have been enumerated. They do not pretend to have exhausted the subject, but only to have seized a few of its prominent points. They have only touched, in four places, the vast and pervading system of federal executive patronage—the press—the post office—the armed force—and the appointing power. They are few, compared to the whole number of points which the system presents, but they are points vital to the liberties of the country.

The press is put foremost, because it is the moving power of human action; the post office is the handmaid of the press; the armed force its executor; and the appointing power the directress of the whole. If the appointing power was itself an emanation of the popular will—if the president was himself the officer and the organ of the people—there would be less danger in leaving to his will the sole direction of all these arbiters of human fate. But things must be taken as they are; statesmen must act for the country they live in, and not for the island of Utopia; they must act upon the state of facts in that country, and not upon the visions of fancy. In the country for which the committee act, the press, with some exceptions; the post office, the armed force, and the appointing power, are in the hands of the president, and the president himself is not in the hands of the people. The president may, and in the current of human affairs, will be against the people; and, in his hands, the arbiters of human fate must be against them also.—This will not do. The possibility of it must be avoided. The safety of the people is the "supreme law;" and to ensure that safety, these arbiters of human fate must change position, and take post on the side of the people.

Office Seeking.—The Georgetown "Metropolitan" informs us that a resignation of one of the Clerks in the Treasury Office at Washington city took place recently, and adds, that as soon as the resignation was known, then came the tug of precocious in the ant chamber. Members of congress who had friends to serve, broken merchants, discharged clerks, ruined spendthrifts and idle boys, rushed in one promiscuous mass, until the secretary found it necessary, to preserve his person from being taken by storm, to have a label pasted up in the ant chamber announcing that the appointment had been made. We understand that the plan was highly approved of, and that the several secretaries have ordered a sign to be hung up, subscribed on one side, "No vacancies in this Office," and on the other side, "No vacancies filled," by which it will be suited for any emergencies, even that of resignation.

Hard Justice.—A boy who last week brought before one of our Judges, says the *Blacksburg Telegraph*, upon a writ of habeas corpus, who had been imprisoned for petit larceny, upon confession which, it is said, was whipped from him by the magistrate. While he was in prison, it was ascertained that the theft was committed by another person. The boy was sorry he would be considered a crime of which he was innocent, and then imprisoned upon confession thus extracted.