

If the opinion of the supreme court covered the whole ground of this act, it ought not to control the co-ordinating authorities of this government. The congress, the executive and the courts must each for itself, be guided by its own opinion of the constitution. Each public officer who takes an oath to support the constitution, swears that he will support it as he understands it, and not as it is understood by others. It is as much the duty of the house of representatives, of the senate, and of the president to decide upon the constitutionality of any bill or resolution which may be presented to them for passage or approval, as it is of the supreme judges when it may be brought before them for judicial decision. The opinion of the judges has no more authority over Congress than the opinion of congress has over the judges; and on that point the president is independent of both. The authority of the supreme court must not, therefore, be permitted to control the congress or the executive, when acting in their legislative capacities, but to have only such influence as the force of their reasoning may deserve.

But in the case relied on, the supreme court have not decided that all the features of the corporation are incompatible with the constitution. It is true that the court have said that the law incorporating the bank is a unconstitutional exercise of power by congress. But taking into view the whole opinion of the court, and the reasoning by which they have come to that conclusion, I understand them to have decided that, inasmuch as a bank is an appropriate means for carrying into effect the enumerated powers of the general government, therefore, the law incorporating it is in accordance with that portion of the constitution which declares that congress shall have power "to make all laws which shall be necessary and proper for carrying those powers into execution." Having satisfied them selves, that the word "necessary" in the constitution, means "beneficial," "desirable," "essential," "conducive to," and that a "bank" is a convenient, a useful and essential instrument in the prosecution of the government's "fiscal operations," they conclude, that "to use one must be within the discretion of congress," and that "the act to incorporate the bank of the U. S. is a law made in pursuance of the constitution;" "but," say they, "before the law is not prohibited and is really calculated to effect any of the objects entrusted to the government, to undertake here to enquire into the degree of its necessity, is to be to pass the line which circumscribes the judicial department and to tread on legislative ground."

The principle here affirmed is that the degree of its necessity, involving all the details of banking institutions, is a question exclusively for legislative consideration. A bank is constitutional; but it is the province of the legislature to determine whether this is to that particular power, privilege or exception, is "necessary and proper" to enable the bank to discharge its duties to the government, and from their decision there is to appeal to the courts of justice. Under the decision of the supreme court, therefore, it is the exclusive province of congress and the president to decide, whether the particular features of this act are "necessary and proper," in order to enable the bank to perform conveniently and efficiently the public duties assigned to it, and to meet the exigencies of the country. It is, then, the particular object of the bank to be "necessary and proper" to the fiscal operations of the government, and therefore constitutional.

With this understanding of the general principle affirmed by the supreme court, let us examine the details of this act in accordance with the rule of legislative construction which they have laid down. It will be found that many of the powers and privileges conferred on it, cannot be strictly construed for the purpose for which it is proposed to be exercised, and are not, therefore, means necessary to attain the end in view, and consequently not justified by the constitution.

The original act of incorporation, section 21, enacts, "that no other bank shall be established by any future law of the United States during the continuance of the corporation hereby created, for which the faith of the United States is hereby pledged. Provided, congress may renew existing charters for banks within the district of Columbia, not exceeding in the whole \$15 millions of dollars if they shall deem it expedient." This provision is continued in force, by the act before me, fifteen years from the 3d of March, 1830.

If congress possessed the power to establish one bank, they had power to establish more than one, in their opinion, two or more banks, had been "necessary," to facilitate the execution of the powers delegated to them in the constitution. If they possessed the power to establish a second bank, it was a power derived from the constitution, to be exercised from time to time, and at any time, when the interests of the country or the emergencies of the government might make it expedient. It was possessed by one congress as well as another, and by all congresses alike, and alike at every session. But the congress of 1816 has taken it away from their successors for twenty years, and the congress of 1832 proposes to abolish it for fifteen years more. It cannot be "necessary" or "proper" for congress to barter away themselves of any of the powers, vested in them by the constitution, to be exercised for the public good. It is not "necessary" to the efficiency of the bank, nor is it "proper" as an end in itself, to give them power to regulate the currency. They may properly use the discretion vested in them; but they may not limit the discretion of their successors. This restriction on themselves and grant of a monopoly to the bank, is, therefore, unconstitutional.

In another point of view this provision is a palpable attempt to amend the constitution by an act of legislation. The constitution, under the "supposition" shall have power to enact such legislation in all cases whatsoever, over the district of Columbia. Its constitutional power, therefore, to establish banks in the district of Columbia, and increase their capital, is total, is unlimited and uncontrollable by any other power than that which gave authority to the constitution. Whether act declares that congress shall "not" increase the capital of existing banks, nor create other banks with capitals exceeding in the whole six millions of dollars. The constitution declares that "states shall have power to exercise legislative authority over their districts, in all cases whatsoever," and that declares they shall not. This is the supreme "law" of the land. This provision cannot be "necessary" or "proper," or "constitutional," unless the absolutely is admitted, that whenever it be "necessary and proper," in the opinion of congress, they have a right to take away some portion of the powers vested in them by the constitution as a means of executing the rest.

On two subjects only does the constitution recognize in congress the power to grant exclusive privileges or monopolies. It declares that "congress shall have power to promote the progress of science and useful arts, by securing, for limited times, to authors and inventors, the exclusive right to their respective writings and discoveries." Out of this express delegation of power, have grown our laws of patent and copy rights. As the constitution expressly delegates to congress the power to grant exclusive privilege in these cases, as a proper means which cannot be restricted or abridged without an amendment of the constitution. Every act of congress, therefore, which attempts by grants of monopoly, or sale of exclusive privilege, for limited time, or for a time without limit, to restrain, extinguish or interfere in the choice of means, to execute its delegated power, is equivalent to a legislative usurpation of the constitution, and palpably unconstitutional.

This act establishes and encourages transfers of stock, in foreign countries, and grants them an exemption from all ad valorem taxation. So far from being a "sale and exchange of titles," the bank should possess this power, to make it a sale and efficient agent of the government in its fiscal operations, it is, in fact, compelled to convert the bank of the United States into a foreign bank, to impoverish our people in time of peace, to dominate a foreign influence through every section of the republic—aided war, to endanger our independence.

The several states reserved the power at the formation of the constitution, to regulate and control titles and transfers of real property, and most, if not all of them, have laws qualifying them from requiring or holding lands within their limits. But this act, in disregard of the undoubted right of the states to preserve such disqualifications, gives to aliens, stockholders in this bank, an interest and title, as members of the corporation, to all the real property it may acquire with any of the states of this Union. This privilege grants to aliens a right not "necessary," to enable the Bank to perform its public duties, nor in any sense "proper," because it is vitally subversive of the rights of the states.

The government of the United States have no constitutional power to purchase lands within the states, except for the erection of forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards, and other needful buildings, and even for these objects only, "by the consent of the legislature of the state in which the same shall be." By making alien stockholders in the bank, and granting to them the power to purchase lands for other

purposes, they assume a power not granted in the constitution, and grant to others what they do not themselves possess. It is not necessary, to the receiving, safe keeping or transmission of the funds of the government, that the bank should possess this power, and it is not proper that congress should thus enlarge the powers delegated to them in the constitution.

The old bank of the United States possessed a capital of only eleven millions of dollars, which was found sufficient to enable it, with deposit and safety, to perform all the functions required of it by the government. The capital of the present bank is forty-five millions of dollars—at least ten times more. The experience has proved to be necessary to enable the bank to perform its public functions. The public debts which existed during the period of the old bank, and on the establishment of the new, have been paid off, and our revenue will soon be ready to meet this increase of capital it is, therefore, not, nor is it for private purposes.

The government is the only "proper" judge, where it is known where their presence will be "necessary."

It cannot, therefore, be "necessary" or "proper" to authorize the bank to locate branches where it pleases to perform the public service, with t constituting the government, and contrary to its will. The principle involved in this is, that the bank, and those who conduct it by the agency of stockholders, can, in effect, not prevent the establishment of a branch bank, and furnish an equal representation of the people, according to the last census, will bear to the capital city, according to the last census, and I doubt not that the verdict of public opinion, will be in favor of the branch bank.

Under such circumstances, the bank comes forward and asks a share of its charter for a few million dollars, up to the conditions which were originally agreed upon, and it is legitimate, any encroachments,

which are entertained and charged are made of gross abuse and violation of trust.

An investigation should be made, to determine the government's rights and responsibilities, and to make it incomplete and unsatisfactory, disclosure enough to exonerate the bank.

In the practice of most crimes, it is dangerous to make an accused man a witness; and dangerous

to call him as a witness, to the trial of his accuser.

It is, however, in the case of the bank, that the

accused is a public functionary, and the witness, a public functionary.

The bank is a clear headed, strong minded man, and

has more of the Roman in him than any living.

"J. F. PERSON, in 1818.

He has done as our fathers did in 1776, asserted the right of our people to freedom, and of our states to independence. His message will be hailed by the entire world, as a second declaration of independence, which they will support, with no less ardor and self-devotion, than their fathers did the first."

THE polarization of the veto-message has struck us for some, today, so much as to compel us, reluctantly, to offer the services of a correspondent, whose chirography, familiar as it is to the conduct of the English side of this paper, may please respecting recitations of by-gone times. We shall certainly avail ourselves of the license he has given us, but most respectfully solicit his correspondence. To a former occasion, but through another medium, he was greeted by us in prose much studied—but, the words of Sheridan, "who the d—l may we take liberties with, that will not pull friends?" On the occasion of the veto-message, he was greeted by us in prose much studied—but, the words of Sheridan, "who the d—l may we take liberties with, that will not pull friends?"

"On the 2d of August, 1818, we took liberties with the d—l, and were greatly annoyed."

"THOS. J. P. PERSON, in 1818.

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"It is evident for the country that Gen. Jackson is likely to be the popular chief at the end of the present four years; for he is the only hope left of avoiding the dangers made manifestly to us by the broad construction now adopted by the constitution of the United States, which makes all limitations of power, and leaves the general government, by theory, altogether unresponsible."

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