

THE BICAMERAL PRINCIPLE IN THE NEW YORK LEGISLATURE

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The bicameral principle in the New York Legislature by David Leigh Colvin

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DAVID LEIGH COLVIN

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PRINCIPLE IN THE NEW
YORK LEGISLATURE**

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The Bicameral Principle in the New York Legislature

BY

DAVID LEIGH COLVIN

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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	5
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CHAPTER I.

THEORIES CONCERNING THE BICAMERAL LEGISLATURE	9
Arguments for the Bicameral System.....	9
Arguments Against the Single Chamber.....	16
Arguments Against the Bicameral System.....	19
Summary of Bicameral Theories	24

CHAPTER II.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE BICAMERAL SYSTEM IN NEW YORK	26
Colonial Period	26
The First Constitution, 1777.....	30
Council of Appointment.....	33
Council of Revision.....	36
Constitutional Convention of 1821.....	39
Later Changes	52

CHAPTER III.

INTERCAMERAL RELATIONS	54
Constitutional Provisions	54
Origination of Bills.....	56
Amendments by the Second House.....	58
The Three Day Provision.....	61
Committees of Conference	63
Rivalry Between the Houses.....	67
Joint Action	70
Relative Quality of Membership.....	71

CHAPTER IV.

CONSIDERATION, REVISION AND CHECK	74
QUANTITATIVE SURVEY OF A LEGISLATIVE SESSION.....	74
Volume of Bills.....	74
Rate of Passage.....	75

THE BICAMERAL PRINCIPLE

The Sifting of Bills.....	77
The Check of the Second House.....	81
Amendments by Each House.....	82
Revision by the Second Chamber.....	82
Carefulness of Consideration.....	84
OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONSIDERATION.....	86
Legislative Procedure	86
Committee Stage	87
Readings of a Bill.....	92
Parallel Course in the Second House.....	95
Bicameral System Does Not Insure Double Consideration.....	96
Interposition of Delay.....	97
THE CHECK OF THE SECOND HOUSE JUDGED BY THE BILLS... 100	
Senate Bills Defeated by the Assembly.....	101
Assembly Bills Defeated by the Senate.....	105
Revision by the Second House.....	108

CHAPTER V.

THE CHECK OF THE EXECUTIVE AND THE JUDICIARY.....	109
The Governor's Veto.....	109
The Check of the Mayors.....	111
Comparison with the Check of the Second House.....	112
Appropriation Bills	112
Classification of Vetoed Bills.....	114
Increasing Power of the Governor.....	115
Recalled Bills	116
Check of the Judiciary.....	119

CHAPTER VI.

A CHECK ON BAD LEGISLATION	122
Legislative Investigations	125
Race Track Gambling Corruption.....	125
The Allds Case.....	128
Insurance Investigation	129
Second Chamber an Obstruction.....	130

CHAPTER VII.

THE PARTY OUTSIDE THE LEGISLATURE.....	133
Correspondence of the Senatorial Vote and the State Party Vote	134
Correspondence of the Assembly Vote and the Party Vote..	136

CONTENTS

3

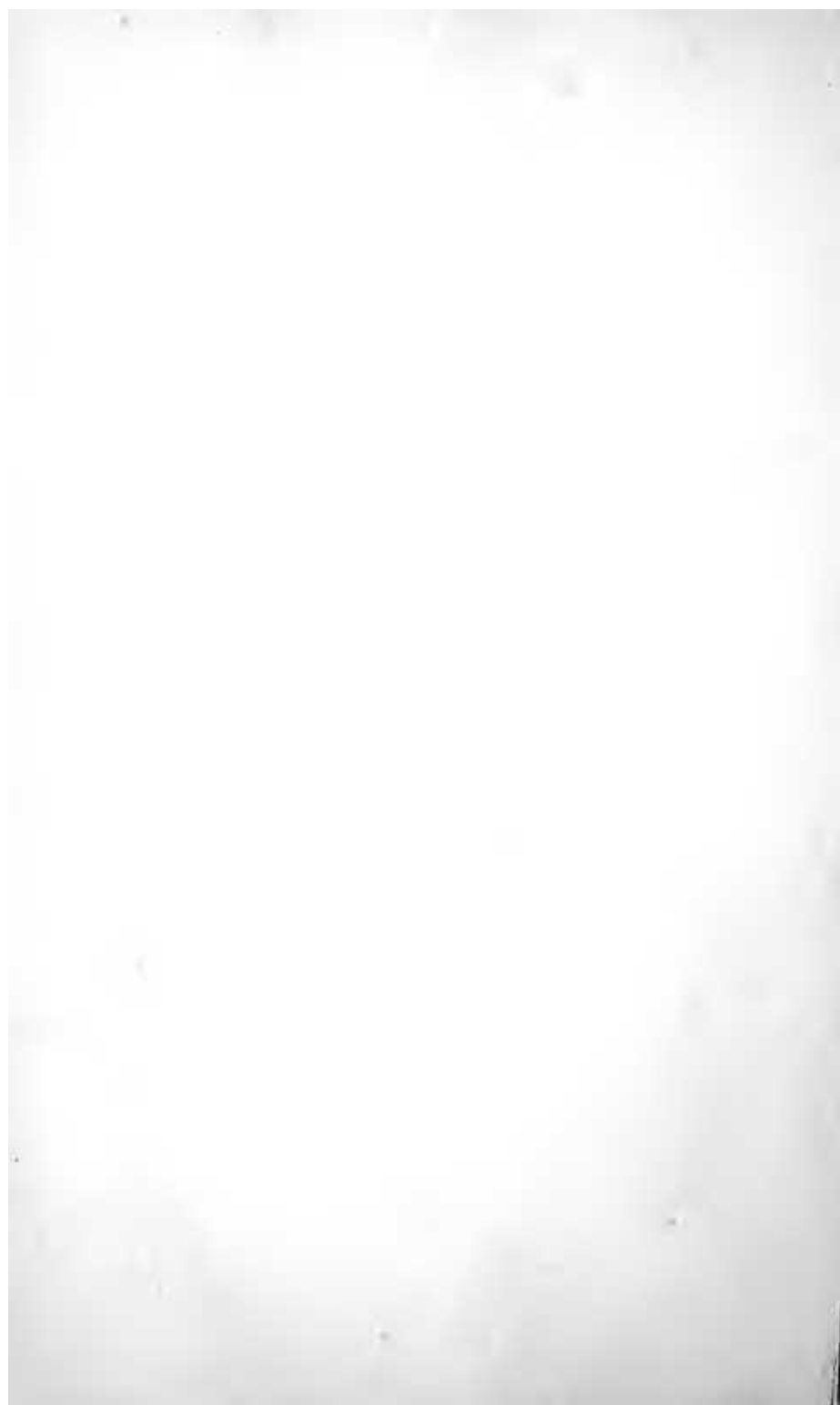
Comparison of the Assembly and the Senate Votes in Relation to the Party Vote.....	137
Correspondence of the Senatorial Vote and the Assembly Vote with Each Other.....	138
Comparison of Senatorial and Congressional Vote.....	139
Election of 1910.....	141
The Inclusiveness of Party.....	143
Example of Houses of Opposite Parties.....	146
The Legislator's Dependence Upon the Party.....	147
Effect of Continuous Uniformity in the Districts.....	148
Strength of Party Organization.....	150
Some Effects of Party Strength.....	152
Methods of Nomination.....	155
Central Control of Nominations.....	158

CHAPTER VIII.

THE PARTY INSIDE THE LEGISLATURE.....	161
The Party Organizes the Legislature.....	162
The Presiding Officers.....	164
The Floor Leaders.....	167
The Rules Committee.....	168
The Party Caucus.....	173
Effect of Concentration of Party Power.....	176
Pressure of the Party Outside.....	178

CHAPTER IX.

CONCLUSIONS	182
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INTRODUCTION

The time seems ripe for an inductive study of the actual workings of the bicameral system. There appears to be a growing skepticism as to whether the two-chamber system in our State governments justifies the claims which have been made in its behalf. Recently the system has been conspicuously challenged in at least three States: In the Ohio Constitutional Convention of 1912, one of the leading members, a distinguished historical writer, introduced a proposal for a single chamber; early in 1913 the governor of the new State of Arizona, in a communication to the legislature, recommended a change in the State Constitution to provide for a single chamber; likewise the governor of Kansas has presented to the legislature of his State for its consideration a proposal for a constitutional amendment which would provide for a legislature of a single house, composed of one or two members from each congressional district. He says that he is satisfied, after eight years of service in the senate of his State, that the present system of law-making is antiquated and inefficient. He thinks that the present dual system is not justified, having been founded on the English Parliament, with its two houses based on the distinction between the nobility and the common people, each representing the diverse interests of these classes. His idea is to apply the plan of government by commission now in operation in many municipalities to the government of the State.

These proposals to change to the single chamber are evidences of the increasing misgivings concerning the