

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

During the past year the people of this Commonwealth have had reason to be grateful to Almighty God for many blessings.

The year has been fruitful, industry has thriven, and with the exception of the injury suffered by the citizens of some of our border counties, through the disgraceful barbarity of the rebel forces...

Table with financial data: Total in Treasury for fiscal year ending Nov. 30, 1864, 6,880,644 72; Public debt Dec. 1, 1864, 39,379,693 94; etc.

The fiscal year accounted for in the statement of the Treasury Department, embraces the time from the 1st of December, 1863, to the 30th of November, 1864.

The operations of the sinking fund during the last year have been shown by my proclamation of the 27th day of September last, as follows:

Amount of debt of Commonwealth reduced, \$268,569 50; Five per cent. loan of the Commonwealth, \$268,308 03; Interest certificates redeemed, 261 47.

The Commonweath holds bonds received from the sale of public works, amounting to \$10,300,000, as follows: Pennsylvania railroad company bonds, 6,800,000 00; Philadelphia and Erie railroad company bonds, 3,500,000 00.

These bonds are in the sinking fund, and reduce the public debt to \$29,079,693 94. The tax on tonnage imposed by the acts on 30th April and 25th August, 1864, has yielded something less than \$200,000—a much less sum than was anticipated.

The revenue derived from the tax on banks during the year amounts to \$533,606 97, but under the existing act of the State so many of our banks have become National banks under the act of Congress...

In my opinion this matter of donations to charities is fast running to a great abuse. Houses of refuge, and insane, blind, and deaf and dumb asylums, appear to be proper subjects of State bounty...

It being alleged that the Atlantic and Great Western railroad company has not in various particulars obeyed the laws by which it was incorporated, the Attorney General (on the suggestion of parties claiming to be thereby injured) has filed an information in equity against that company...

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which I refer, I communicated to the Legislature, in some detail, the circumstances connected with the advances by banks and other corporations of the funds to pay the volunteer militia of 1863.

It is not necessary here to recapitulate them at length. The case was peculiar, and it is believed none quite like it has occurred. The call for volunteers was made by the authorities of the United States, but it being found that men could not be got under that call, the form of a call by the State authorities for the defence of the State was, with the assent of the President, substituted.

The United States agreed to furnish the arms, subsistence and supplies, but it was alleged that Congress had made no appropriation covering the pay. In this state of things, the emergency being great, the Secretary of War telegraphed me, thus:

WASHINGTON, July 22, 1863. To his Excellency, Gov. A. G. Curtin: Your telegram respecting the pay of militia, called out under your proclamation of the 27th of June, have been referred to the President for instructions, and have been under his consideration.

He directs me to say, that while no law or appropriation authorizes the payment, by the General Government, of troops that have not been mustered into the service of the United States, he will recommend to Congress to make an appropriation for the payment of troops called into State service to repel an actual invasion, including those of the State of Pennsylvania.

If, in the meantime, you can raise the necessary amount, as has been done in other States, the appropriation will be applied to refund the advance to those who made it. Measures have been taken for the payment of troops mustered into the United States service as soon as the muster and pay rolls are made out.

The answer of this department, to you as Governor of the State, will be given directly to yourself, whenever the department is prepared to make answer.

(Signed) EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.

The banks and other corporations refused to advance the money unless I would pledge myself to ask an appropriation from the Legislature to refund it.

I communicate herewith the reports of Colonel Jordan, at Washington, and Col. Chamberlain, agent for the Southwest. The provisions of the law requiring the agents to collect moneys due by the United States to soldiers, have been beneficial. A reference to their reports will show the magnitude and usefulness of this branch of their service.

I desire to invite the attention of all our volunteers, officers, soldiers and their families to the fact that the State agents will collect all their claims on the Government gratuitously, as I have reason to believe that many are still ignorant of that fact, and are greatly imposed upon by the exorbitant commissions charged by private claim agents.

Under the act of the 6th of May, 1864, I appointed Hon. Thomas H. Burrows to take charge of the arrangements for the education of the orphans of soldiers. I communicate herewith a copy of his report on the subject. He has discharged his duties with commendable zeal, fidelity and efficiency.

I earnestly recommend that a permanent and liberal appropriation be made to support this just and worthy scheme of beneficence.

I feel it to be my duty to invite your serious attention to the evils growing out of the system of passing acts of incorporation, for purposes which are provided for by general laws. We have passed acts authorizing charters to be obtained without special legislation.

These acts have been generally prepared with some care, and contain the provisions which the Legislature thought necessary to protect the Commonwealth and her citizens.

If these general laws are not found to answer such purposes, they should be amended and perfected. If any company desires to be incorporated with greater privileges than are conferred, or to be relieved from any of the conditions imposed by these acts, it appears to me that it should be required first to obtain a charter under the general laws, and then apply to the Legislature for an act making the changes which are desired.

The attention of the Legislature will thus be drawn to the fact that great evil results from the habit of granting privileges to a corporation by a mere reference to some former private act relating to other corporations, sometimes without even giving the date of these acts.

All these practices are bad, and although they may be pursued by parties having no bad intention, yet they certainly originated in the design of surprising the Commonwealth into grants of privileges which it was known could not be obtained if their extent were understood, and they are often followed new for the same fraudulent purpose.

two essential objects of, 1. The admission of legal and exclusion of illegal votes at the polls; and, 2. Faithful and correct returns of the votes actually polled.

I have endeavored since I came into office to exercise as cautiously as possible the powers confided to the Executive, and avoid usurping any, I shall endeavor to persist in this course to the end.

A new call has been made by the President for 300,000 men. This renders it proper that I should invite your attention to the evils which have resulted from abuses of the system of local bounties which was begun, in an emergency, by the voluntary and generous loyalty of our citizens, before the passage by Congress of the enrollment act, and has since been continued by sundry acts of Assembly.

The result has been to the last degree oppressive to our citizens, and unproductive of corresponding benefit to the Government. In some counties and townships it is believed that the bounty tax, during the last year, exceeded the average income derived from the land.

The large sums offered in some places in the competition for men, have demoralized many of our people, and the most atrocious frauds connected with the system have become common.

The men of some of the poorer counties have been nearly exhausted by their volunteers being credited to richer localities paying heavier bounties. The system as practiced, lowers the morale of the army itself, by putting into the ranks men actuated by merely mercenary motives, and who are tempted to desert by the facility of escaping detection, and the prospect of new gains by re-enlistment, a process which they expect to be able to repeat an indefinite number of times.

Of the number of men for whom bounties have been paid, it is believed that not one-fourth have been actually placed in the ranks of the army, and even those who have joined it have probably not on an average received for their own use one-half of the bounty paid for them.

Immense sums, have thus been appropriated to the pockets of unscrupulous and unprincipled speculators in many agencies of the Government.

An effort was made to prosecute some of the parties concerned in such frauds under the act of Assembly of 14th August last, and they were bound over by the Mayor of this city, but after the witnesses had come here on the meeting of the court, they disappeared from the public eye.

Commonwealth by the existing state of affairs renders it absolutely necessary that the clerical force of his department should be increased. The making out of commissions for our large army of volunteers in the field, and the preparations of election blanks required by law to be sent to the army—the receipt, filling and recording the returns of the soldiers' votes—the enrollment of the yearly increasing number of acts of Assembly, and charters obtained under general laws and the making out of letters patent for them—all these, together with the previous heavy duties of the office—form an aggregate, the weight of which must ultimately break down his few subordinates, diligent, faithful and enduring as they are.

I recommend, therefore, that provision be promptly made to meet the necessities of this case.

It is a subject of just congratulation that notwithstanding the distracted condition of the country, our system of common schools continues to flourish. The report of the Superintendent, which I herewith transmit, shows that there has been an increase of scholars during the past year.

It is important to secure as teachers a sufficient number of men of suitable education and ability, and with a view to this object, I suggest for your consideration the expediency of making out of the school fund itself some provision for the support of such teachers as shall after a given term of service become superannated or disabled while in the performance of their duties.

Of the fund placed in my hands by the acts of the 16th May, 1861, and on the 4th of May, 1864, and to be appropriated in my judgment in military service, I have expended in the last year \$3,124 68 in support of the agency at Washington—up until the 30th of May last, for my personal staff and other military services, an account of which is settled in the office of the Auditor General.

No similar appropriation will be required at this session. A bill was introduced and passed the House at the last session of the Legislature providing for the appointment of a commission to ascertain the damages done in the counties of Bedford, Fulton, Franklin, Cambeland, York and Adams, by the rebel army in 1863, which failed in the Senate for want of time.

I commend to your consideration the propriety of the passage of such a bill during the present session. It is just to the people of these counties who have suffered, as well as to the Government, that these damages should be fairly ascertained and the evidence perpetuated, whatever may be the view to be taken on future consideration by the United States or State claims.

Major General Hancock has been authorized by the War Department to raise a corps of veterans, to be called the First Corps. One of the regulations is that on application by the Governor of any State, recruiting officers will be designated for such State.

I have heretofore declined to comply with the request. It appears to me that the families of men raised on the plan adopted by the War Department would probably not be entitled to the relief provided by our own laws for the families of volunteers.

tion of personal good will, and regret that there should be any hesitation on your part to send your official influence, as Governor, to the raising of the corps as proposed by the War Department.

It is not within my province, perhaps, to discuss the plan of organization, as I am acting under the direct orders of the War Department, and my own views, therefore, are of no practical moment. I may say, however, that I have no knowledge of the organization other than what I have derived from the orders and circulars of which I mailed you official copies December 5th.

I cannot see how volunteers for this corps from your State lose any of the advantages attaching to those for other organizations. They are credited to the localities where they or their families are domiciled, and count on the quota of your State.

It should be borne in mind that this is an effort to get men into service who are not subject to a draft. I have the honor to remain, very respectfully, your obedient servant, WINFIELD S. HANCOCK.

Maj. Gen. U. S. Volunteers, commanding First Corps. The only act of Congress for raising volunteers that I am aware of, requires that the field and line officers shall be commissioned by the Governors of the several States.

The men in this corps are not to be formed into organizations of the respective States, and it is proposed that its officers shall be appointed by the General Government. I know of no act of Congress or of Assembly under which men so raised will be entitled to pensions or their families to benefits from the United States or State Government.

In addition, I will observe that without any feeling of jealousy, I am still not ready to participate actively in transferring to the United States illegally the right of appointment vested in the State, and which the State authorities can exercise with more discrimination by reason of having a greater familiarity with the merits of the citizens of their own State, than the United States authorities can possibly have.

I will transmit any further communication that I may receive on this subject. It will be perceived by reference to the correspondence, that I have offered to raise, in the manner provided by law, two or three regiments of veterans for Hancock's Corps. My desire is to assist the Government in every legal mode in raising men, and especially to facilitate an officer—a native Pennsylvanian—so distinguished as General Hancock, in his efforts to organize a new corps.

I shall throw no obstacles in his way on the present occasion, but I cannot, certainly, be expected to invite a violation of laws in carrying out a plan which sacrifices the rights of the State under existing laws, and would leave the men unprotected by them, so far as concerns future provision for their comfort and that of their families.

I will further observe that it appears by the report of the Adjutant General, herewith transmitted, that the State, under the system established by law, has put into the military service of the United States since the commencement of the war, the following number of men viz:

Table with columns: Troops sent into service during 1864, Organizations for three years term, Organizations for one hundred day's term, etc.

The twenty-five thousand militia of 1864 are not included in this statement. I call the attention of the Legislature to the Report of the Surveyor General, herewith presented, and commend the suggestions made by that officer to your consideration.