

THE BEAVER ARGUS
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BEAVER ARGUS.

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MESSAGE OF GOV. CURTIN.

HARRISBURG, Jan. 30, 1866.
To the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your message of the 27th of November, 1865, and to reply to it in this manner. I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your message of the 27th of November, 1865, and to reply to it in this manner. I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your message of the 27th of November, 1865, and to reply to it in this manner.

Notwithstanding the large expenditures by the State for military purposes, since the breaking out of the rebellion, the condition of the Treasury is now \$2,553,379 12 better than it was then, and I am proud to be able to state further that on the 1st of September, 1865, the State debt was \$492,938 66 less than it was on the 1st of Jan. 1861. These are truly gratifying facts.

Under these circumstances, it may be possible, with entire safety to our finances to reduce or even repeal the ordinary State tax of two and a half mills on real estate. The tax of one and a half mill laid by the act of May 18, 1861, was that act expressly pledged for the payment of the loan of \$3,000,000, thereby authorized, and of course cannot be repealed or reduced until that repayment shall have been made. I recommend this subject to the careful and deliberate consideration and judgment of the Legislature, and it should be found that the tax could be repealed, I recommend that all laws authorizing the levying of local taxes on bonds, mortgages, loans and all property of that kind be also repealed. Such a repeal would largely encourage the investment of capital in this State, while the local authorities lose very little, as it is notorious, that from the difficulties of assessment, they receive very little from these sources.

In case of such repeal, I recommend the adoption of some effectual measure for enforcing correct returns of such objects of taxation with appropriate penalties for the neglect or refusal to make them.

I make these recommendations believing that it will lead to more equitable local taxation, and to greater economy in their disbursement. Many acts are on our statute books, incorporating companies for various purposes, which companies have never been organized or gone into operation. I recommend that all such acts be repealed by a general law, and that provision be made that in future every act authorizing a corporation shall become void, unless the corporation shall organize and use its franchise within a limited time.

Since my last annual message to you, against armed treason, has been brought to a close. Of the large contributions made by Pennsylvania to the National Army, but a few of the men now remain in the service. The flag, which was raised with pride and satisfaction to the part taken by this State, in aiding to maintain the unity of the Government and its defense against the assaults of its enemies.

In my first inaugural address, I took occasion to declare that Pennsylvania, would, under any circumstances, render a full and determined support to the free institutions of the Union. The pledge so made was based upon my knowledge of the solid patriotism of her citizens. At that time danger threatened, but no one anticipated that it would break forth so suddenly, nor that it would grow to such fearful proportions as it is in a brief time assumed.

By the report of the State Treasurer, it will be observed that the extraordinary expenditures growing out of the war, not refunded by the General Government, have been \$4,025,672 21. This includes the direct tax paid to the United States by the State which is now reimbursable. In the balance is included the \$671,476 43 paid to the militia, which, with a good portion of the remaining expenditures, is clearly due the State from the General Government.

The necessity for extraordinary expenditures having ceased with the suppression of the late rebellion, measures should be taken to examine our resources, and relieve, as far as possible, the heavy burdens to which our people are subjected.

It has been the habit, of late years, to appropriate, freely, annual sums for the support of local charities; and such appropriations are almost every year increased in number and amount. House of Refuge, Institutions for the Deaf and Dumb and for the blind, Lunatic Asylums, these appear to be proper objects of State bounty, because a few of them are sufficient for the whole State and to leave them to be provided for by the local authorities would, in fact, be to deprive of protection the unfortunate classes for whose benefit they are designed. But mere local charities, however meritorious and effective, should, I think, be left to the support of the benevolent parties who established them.

It is unjust that the people of the Commonwealth should be coerced to pay taxes in order that part of the money so raised may be given to the support of local charities, conducted by private associations, especially when it is remembered that hitherto a small proportion of the private charities in the State have asked for any appropriation.

I recommend, therefore, that no appropriation be made, for charities, beyond the institutions which I have above specified.

The taxes at present laid by corporations are unequal, and to a certain extent thereby unjust. I recommend the subject to the attention of the Legislature, with a view to a revision of the system.

Within a few years, acts have been repeatedly passed directing the expenditure of as much money as may be necessary to effect named purposes, sometimes without clearly designating by whom the money is to be expended, or how the accounts are to be examined. This custom is very recent, and has already led to abuses, and that no appropriation be made without having the exact purpose designated, the specific purpose designated, the officer by whom it is to be expended, and providing that the accounts shall be settled in the usual manner.

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