

# American Monitor.

BY JOHN B. BRATTON.

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## GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

To the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania:

**ELLOW CITIZENS**—The legislative branch of the Government, meets under circumstances calculated to produce deep emotions of gratitude. The events of the past year cannot fail to afford assurance of the confidence and the friendly favor of the Universe, and of the blessings he has dispensed to the people of this Commonwealth. While in other parts of our country, and in distant lands, pestilence has made fearful ravages; leaving in its track the wretchedness of destitution and the tears of crushed affections; a healthful climate, in the disposal of a righteous Providence, has preserved the citizens of the State comparatively free from the miasma and evil destroyer. During a period of war, famine and civil commotion in other parts of the world, bringing in their train desolation and want; blighting the hopes, paralyzing the industry, and ruining the property of the people; our beloved Commonwealth, in union with other States under the National Government, has enjoyed the delights of peace and its citizens, in the exercise of industrial pursuits, have found contentment and competence. To the Author and Guardian of our being, whose beneficence caused all things to work together for our good, our reverence and gratitude are especially due.

The recent efforts for the establishment of liberal political institutions in Europe, have excited in the people of this country, the warmest sympathies. The conflict between the oppressor and the oppressed, wherever may be the incidents or results, having for its object a government capable of protecting and extending political and social liberty, must be regarded by the people of the United States with the deepest solicitude. In the enjoyment of institutions which recognize the inherent rights of man, and are founded on the acknowledged principle that all political power is a trust to be exercised for the benefit of the citizen, they cannot witness the struggle between despotism and freedom, without ardent interest and sincere prayers for the triumph of liberty and enlarged justice. It is impossible to behold a people long the subjects of tyranny and oppression;—enlightened by our example, and solicitous for equal enjoyment—rising up beneath the burthen which countries have heaped upon them,—casting aside the reverence for power, and the pride of royal splendor; looking forward to the establishment of human rights; to the elevation of the moral and social condition of society; and placing their lives and fortunes on the hazard of a struggle for these objects; without on our part, an earnest desire that they may succeed. That struggle has been unsuccessful. The arbitrary Governments, in whose midst the noblest patriots erected their standard, have succeeded with their immense force in maintaining tyrannical authority, and the brave men who fought for freedom, have either perished under the barbarous reactions of despotic will, or they wander in foreign lands, cities from homes, that no longer afford security. It is not the policy of our Nation, to permit to mingle in the controversies of foreign nations, nor is it desirable that it should, by acts of hostility or friendship, break up the commercial relations which exist for mutual advantage; but it is nevertheless, no violation of international law, to enter our solemn protest, and warning against such a course, and to urge upon the people of these nations, to unite with others, in the expression of their indignation against the violation of international law, and national law, involved in the despotic or arbitrary purposes of the brave defenders of human rights.

In consideration of the Legislature is respectfully invited to the financial condition of the Commonwealth. The present funded debt is as follows: 6 per cent. loans, \$2,041,022 51 5 per cent. do, 37,365,116 90 4 per cent. do, 200,000 00 \$39,606,139 41

Unfunded debt to wit: Relief notes in circulation, \$653,164 00 Interest on certificates outstanding, 179,422 91 " on certificates to be added which the same shall be funded or paid, 11,394 34 Domestic creditors (on settlement), 85,104 88 \$863,985 94

Amount by canal, railroad, and motive power debt, contracted prior to the violation of international law, and paid by the appropriations of the last session, \$3,330 53

Total indebtedness of Commonwealth Dec. 1849, \$40,576,413 45

|  |   |   |                                    |                       |                        |  |                                    |  |   |                           |                                 |                          |                               |  |                         |                            |                         |                                  |                         |  |                |
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| Saloons and Ten Pin Alley Licenses, 5,000 00 | Distillery and Brewery Licenses, 1,500 00 | Eating Houses, Beer Houses and Restaurants, 16,000 00 | Patent Medicine Licenses, 3,000 00 | Pamphlet Laws, 500 00 | Millin Finns, 2,000 00 | Tax on Writs, Wills, Deeds, &c., 40,000 00 | Collateral Inheritance, 200,000 00 | Canal and Railroad Tolls, 1,825,000 00 | Canal Fines and Sale of old Materials, 5,000 00 | Excise on laws, 11,000 00 | Premiums on Charters, 40,000 00 | Tax on Loans, 125,000 00 | Income Plane Loan, 270,000 00 | Dividends on Turnpike and Bridge Bonds, 4,000 00 | Nicholson Lands, 300 00 | Accrued Interest, 5,000 00 | Refunded Cash, 5,000 00 | Fees of Public Offices, 2,000 00 | Miscellaneous, 2,000 00 | Interest on Stock purchased, 15,000 00 | \$4,566,300 00 |
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| Estimated payments during the year 1850: | Public Improvements, 864,000 00 | Expenses of Government, 235,000 00 | Millin Expenses, 4,000 00 | Pensions and Gratifications, 20,000 00 | Charitable Institutions, 80,000 00 | Common Schools, 200,000 00 | Interest on Loans, 2,005,000 00 | Guaranties of Interest, 35,500 00 | Domestic Creditors, 10,000 00 | Damages on Public Works, 20,000 00 | Special Commissioners, 2,000 00 | State Library, 2,000 00 | Public Buildings and Grounds, 2,000 00 | Penitentiaries, 15,000 00 | House of Refuge, 5,000 00 | Nicholson Lands, 300 00 | Escheats, 2,000 00 | Abatement of State Tax, 40,000 00 | Council Fees and Commissions, 2,000 00 | Miscellaneous, 5,000 00 | Insolvent Debtors (Schubkill), 270,000 00 | North Branch Canal, 150,000 00 | Commissioners of the Sinking Fund, 293,000 00 | \$4,034,800 00 |
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The foregoing estimated balance to the Treasury at the end of the fiscal year would appear to justify the appropriation of \$4,000,000 towards the completion of the Western reservoir at Johnstown, as hereinafter recommended. It would also authorize the appropriation of a sum not less than \$300,000, in addition to the amount already appropriated, to be expended in the completion of the North Branch Canal.

The Legislature at its last session authorized the re-issuance of the relief notes then in circulation, and the amount of circulation for three years. The amount of the whole issue now outstanding is \$653,164 00. The amount paid by the Treasury and supplied by a new issue is 443,337 00. Balance, \$209,827 00.

The above balance has been destroyed, or has failed to reach the Treasury during the year. These notes, the redemption of which being suspended, and affording a safe and convenient local currency, have the confidence and favor of the citizens. It is therefore recommended that authority be given to the proper officers, to keep them in good condition, by a new issue, in lieu of such as may become mutilated and defaced.

In addition to the suggestions made to the Legislature on the subject of the money to be loaned to the State, it is deemed proper to call your attention to the fact, that a portion of the funded debt is overdue; a part bearing an interest of six per cent; and a part falling due this year 1850 as follows: The amount of five per cent. funded debt over due, except bank charter loans, is \$254,519 10. The amount of six per cent. funded debt, 1,732,335 00. The amount of five per cent. funded debt falling due on or before Dec. 1, 1850, is 999,211 10. The amount of unfunded debt now due, 85,104 88. Amount demandable at the Treasury during the year, 3,191,170 10.

The Commissioners, during the past year, have been as follows: On collateral inheritance tax, \$180,212 41. Premiums on charters, 35,969 20. Eating and Oyster houses and Restaurants, 5,867 20. Billiard and bowling saloons and ten pin alleys, 2,985 50. Theatre, circus and menagerie licenses, 2,210 00. Distillery and Brewery licenses, 384 00. Amount received for the year ending Dec. 1, 1849, \$227,639 01.

The estimated payments for the same purpose, for the year ending Dec. 1, 1850, are as follows: From collateral inheritance tax, \$200,000 00. Interest on stocks purchased, 15,000 00. Premiums on charters, 40,000 00. Theatre, circus and menagerie licenses, 3,000 00. Distillery and brewery licenses, 1,500 00. Billiard and bowling saloons, and ten pin alleys, 5,000 00. Eating and Oyster houses and Restaurants, 15,000 00. Balance Treasury after deducting appropriations heretofore recommended, 91,500 00. \$371,000 00.

The opinion is confidently expressed that the estimated receipts above stated will be found to approximate the truth, should an adherence to the policy pursued by the last Legislature, in relation to premiums on charters, and other collateral inheritance taxes, and on the tax on collateral inheritance, and on theatre, circus and menagerie licenses, prior to the act creating a sinking fund, yielded to the Treasury about the sum of \$15,000 annually. By the provision of that act, these have been increased, and the same have been stated, and other sources of revenue have been treated by recommendations heretofore made to the Legislature.

With these means for the supply of the sinking fund, together with such additions as the probable resources of the Treasury, from time to time may justify, it is susceptible of easy calculation, to determine how nearly approaches the period when the State taxes may be repealed, and the burthen of the people removed. So manifestly important a subject, and one which should be the constant care of the Legislature, and the interests and honor of the State, it is suggested for consideration whether good policy would not require the transfer of all balances in the Treasury at the end of each year to the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund.

Every consideration that can impose itself on a government demands the payment of the public debt. The local advantages of our Commonwealth, the ability of our citizens, the vastness of our agricultural resources, the fertility of our soil, the industry of every class of our citizens! Should these balances remain in the Treasury unappropriated to the said fund, the history of the past will remind us that prodigal expenditures will be made to objects of no utility, and the State will be brought to the verge of ruin.

The subject of the reformation and equalization of the laws for raising revenue, is again earnestly pressed upon the attention of the Legislature. Great injustices arise under existing enactments, from the want of uniformity in the mode of assessing the tax, and making false returns of property subject to taxation. The conscientious citizen, scrupulously exact in the performance of his obligations to society, may complain of laws which suffer the dishonest to elude the payment of the public debt, and the property and public interests, be assessed so unequally, that great reason for complaint exists throughout the State. To remedy to some extent this evil, it would be well to refer to the Legislature, the committee, to collect from the plaintiffs in judgments the tax thereon assessed, and if necessary, to engage payment by legal process; allowing to the officer intrusted with this duty a reasonable compensation, to be paid out of the fund by the plaintiff when the payment has been compelled by legal process.

A similar provision with regard to mortgages, giving the mortgagee the authority before stated in relation to judgments, would be equally beneficial to the State, and would doubtless compel the payment of a large amount of revenue, now fraudulently withheld.

The method adopted, in the management of the public works is, and diminishes the revenue from that source not less than \$50,000. To guard against a recurrence of this evil, it is recommended that the Western Reservoir, in the construction of which, the sum of sixty thousand dollars has been expended, be completed. The estimated amount required for its completion is \$40,000, and with the opinion of the State, would be secured; and the large discretionary powers now vested in superintendents and supervisors, in the appropriation of money for repairs, would be placed in officers directly accountable to the people. In relation to this subject, legislation should be clear and specific, as discretionary power over the money of the citizen must be deprecated by right thinking.

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