

GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

To the Honorable the Senators and Members of the House of Representatives of the General Assembly.

GENERAL: A beneficent Providence has favored the people of our Commonwealth with a high degree of health and general prosperity during the year just closed, and with many other causes of pleasure and gratitude. Humbly acknowledging these blessings, let us ask His divine direction in the discharge of our official obligations.

It affords me unfeigned delight to welcome the Representatives of the people to the seat of government, and to enjoy a time upon the floor of their combined wisdom in the administration of public affairs; as it is also an agreeable task to perform the constitutional injunction that requires the Executive to communicate to that general Assembly information of the State of the Commonwealth, and make such suggestions and recommendations as the welfare of the people and the exigencies of the times may seem to demand; and to the discharge of this obligation I now proceed.

The receipts of the treasury for the year 1853, exclusive of loans and including the actual balance in the treasury on the first day of December 1852, being \$671,037 72, amounted to the sum of \$5,922,474 47.

The payments for the same period, exclusive of loans and other extraordinary expenditures, make a total sum of \$4,134,048 47, being \$1,818,326 10 less than the receipts. Of this excess, \$305,057 58 was paid to the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund, and \$1,513,268 52 the payment of old debts and the construction of new work on the North Branch canal and Portage railroad, being part of the temporary loans authorized by the Act of the 21st of December last; together with the balance in the treasury applicable to the redemption of outstanding loans, reduces the actual balance on the first day of December 1853 to \$1,109,416 89, being one hundred and twenty five thousand dollars, to be used in the payment of the Treasury interest.

The receipts for the year 1854, including the actual balance in the treasury on the first day of December 1853, may be safely estimated at \$8,846,417 34.

The expenditures for the same period, including the actual balance in the treasury on the first day of December 1853, will not exceed the sum of \$4,600,000, leaving a balance of \$4,246,417 34, which, together with the balance in the treasury on the first day of December 1853, will amount to \$5,492,834 68, being one hundred and twenty five thousand dollars, to be used in the payment of the Treasury interest.

It is thus made apparent to my mind, that the treasury will have the ability, during the coming year, to make the entire amount of the temporary loans now outstanding, and pay the interest which I have already referred to. No additional drafts should be made upon it, without providing for the interest on the same.

At this time my inclination is, to make the liabilities of the State were as follows, to wit: Six per cent. bonds, \$2,131,022 51; Four and one-half per cent. do., \$1,250,000 00; Relief notes, per act of July 1851, \$60,162 00; Interest on the bonds of 1844, 45, and 46, with interest on the bonds of 1847, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, \$2,500,000 00; Domestic creditors' certificates, \$2,500,000 00; Total liabilities, Dec. 1, 1853, \$4,011,484 51.

From which take the following payments: To the sinking fund, \$1,513,268 52; To the Commissioners of the Sinking Fund, \$305,057 58; To the interest on the bonds of 1844, 45, and 46, with interest on the bonds of 1847, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, \$2,500,000 00; Total payments, \$3,321,334 10; Balance on hand, \$789,950 41; Total assets, \$4,111,284 51.

Total amount of funded debt at this time, \$40,272,225 00. To meet this apparent increase of \$1,177,777 50 of the public debt, it should be observed, that by the cancellation of six per cent. bonds, we have a saving of \$200,000 in the treasury; and by the cancellation of a virtual payment of \$400,000 of the five per cent. bonds. The amount thus saved will be a permanent resource without making any exertion from the people to constitute a sinking fund, and to reduce the public debt to the amount of \$38,225,000.

The floating liabilities consist of demands upon the treasury at the period I have indicated, were as follows: Damages, balances on contracts, and for labor and materials, \$1,000,000 00; For the year ending 1853, \$1,000,000 00; For the year ending 1854, \$1,000,000 00; Total, \$3,000,000 00.

From the foregoing figures it is apparent that the operations of the treasury have exceeded our most sanguine expectations, yielding over a million of dollars annually above the ordinary charges and expenses; and showing, that the improvements had been in progress, two millions, at least, of the public debt could have been paid during the last two years. In addition to these extraordinary expenditures, there was paid out of the treasury during said period, in pursuance of laws passed prior to 1852, for the State Lunatic Asylum, \$70,700; for the publication of the Pennsylvania Archaeological Records, \$23,163 52; for the improvement of the State Penitentiary, \$25,000; for the publication of Professor Rogers' Geological Survey, \$10,000; for the preparation of the register of 1854, \$12,190 19; to the Sugar Valley and Deer Creek turnpike company, \$8,000.

It will be readily perceived, therefore, that should the appropriations hereafter be confined strictly to the ordinary expenses of government, we shall have an annual surplus revenue exceeding one million of dollars, applicable to the payment of the public debt, and to the improvement of the policy of the State, after the completion of the works now in progress, will not be doubted. The importance of such economy in view of the great debt of the Commonwealth, and the relief of the people from taxation for State purposes, is too manifest for argument. Entertaining these views, I could not but be gratified by any new schemes of improvement by the State.

The operations on the public works for the year just closed do not present a very flattering picture, so far as relates to revenue. The aggregate amount of business was larger, twenty per cent, than that of any former year, and the gross receipts amounted to the sum of \$1,025,498 39, being \$205,883 09 over the receipts of 1852. This increase of revenue without a corresponding increase of receipts, is the consequence of a very great reduction in the rate of tolls, in consequence of the Canal Commission's demand by public policy; and it may be said that whatever has been lost to the treasury was given to extend

commerce and trade. The expenditures for the year, according to the report of the Canal Commissioners, amounted to the sum of \$1,177,749 77, having a net balance of \$274,758 68; but as this sum does not include any portion of the cost of new locomotive engines, and the erection of farm bridges, the deduction of the proper proportion of these will leave the sum of \$704,752 58 as the actual net balance.

The receipts and expenditures and general operations on the Columbia Railroad exhibit an encouraging state of affairs, as they also do on the other divisions of the canal they are tolerable; but on the Allegheny Portage railroad the condition of affairs is entirely unsatisfactory. The system of management heretofore practiced on that complicated and difficult work, would seem to demand a speedy and radical change.

But the Executive, under the laws as they now stand, is not authorized to direct the operations of the public works, it is right and proper that I should leave the explanation of the details of their workings and management to the people's agents, who have more opportunity to be acquainted with the details of the same.

I am, however, still entirely sanguine that with the necessary change in the system of management, the public improvements can be made to yield a very handsome revenue to the treasury; indeed, for the last year, had the expenses on the Mountain division been confined to a reasonable sum, the net revenues would have reached one million of dollars, and the construction of these important works, in addition to the new road, or in some other way, and we shall realize, by the year 1855, a net profit equal to the interest on twenty-two millions or more of the public debt.

The work on the railroad to avoid the inclined planes on the Allegheny mountains, has not progressed so rapidly as has been anticipated. It is the opinion of the engineer, however, as will appear on reference to his report, that should the necessary means be promptly furnished, the entire line could be completed during the coming year. The estimated cost of the work, with the exception of four miles, and the cost of this balance, together with the expenses of laying down a single track, is estimated at six hundred and twenty thousand dollars, in addition to the value of the old track. The engineer also estimates the annual saving, as compared with the expenditures on the old road, on a business of one million of dollars, at one hundred and twenty thousand dollars. He also states that the road between No. 4 and Hollidaysburg, with a double track will cost about eight hundred and twenty thousand dollars, in addition to the value of the old track, for a like distance.

Viewed in every aspect, it must be confessed that this branch of the public affairs presents an encouraging alternative. The prompt completion of the new work will involve the redemption of more capital than the State can command without resorting to further temporary loans; and on the other hand, the maintenance of the old road, at a cost of four hundred and fifty thousand dollars per annum, is quite out of the question. In exhausting demands on the treasury must be speedily obviated, and for my part I am not disposed to make any exception to the completion of the new road.

At the time I assumed the duties of my present station I found this work in progress of construction; the western slope up to the summit of the mountain had been placed under the management of the Canal Commission, and the eastern slope, as far as the summit of the mountain, was under the management of the State.

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The estimated cost of completing the North Branch canal, at the period already named, was \$7,200,000. One million of dollars has been paid, and a sum exceeding one hundred and fifty thousand dollars is still required to pay for its completion. With such unexpected demands upon the treasury, it would not be unreasonable to expect an increase of the liabilities of the State; but it is altogether gratifying and astonishing to know, that this work has not only been completed, but that the State is now in a position to extend the same to the New York line to Elmita, will be ready for business during the present month, and the State work from Pittsburg to the Allegheny, a distance of thirty miles, has been completed.

The unfinished part of the work between Athens and the State line, a space of about two and a half miles, the completion of which is a matter of great importance, and which has been assigned to the Canal Commission, and the Governor, under an act of Assembly, to negotiate with the Junction canal company for its completion. But when this section, which is an ample reward in ample time for the spring trade.

These works will complete the link in a chain of water communication between the Chesapeake bay and the northern lakes. The struggle for this achievement has been long and arduous, covering nearly a quarter of a century. But the triumph shall be brilliant one, and must be a source of gratification to the people of the entire State.

Most auspicious and promising is it to the enterprising inhabitants of Northern Pennsylvania, that the completion of this canal, which will be a source of gratification to the people of the entire State, will be a source of gratification to the people of the entire State.

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tion can be realized, they would not agree to sell. The first inquiry, therefore, is, why should these works be sold? The answer usually given is, that the measure is necessary to reduce the State debt, and relieve the people from taxation. These are great objects, and should, as I have no doubt, they will receive our warmest sympathies; but their realization, however, must depend mainly upon the success of the public works.

Should the interest on the public debt be liquidated by the works, then it would be late economy to sell. In that case the measure would not be a mere business operation, but a measure of public policy, and should be considered as such. It is to be desired, that the public works, should not be undertaken, until the system of management, and the system of direction, are such as to insure the most economical and efficient use of the public funds.

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with me, and is equivalent to a fair profit, and that it is eminently so in the repair and general supervision of railroads and canals. This shifting practice has had the effect of making the works a species of Normal schools for the education of engineers and supervisors to take the place of other improvements. This shiftingshifting practice has had the effect of making the works a species of Normal schools for the education of engineers and supervisors to take the place of other improvements.

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corporations, and that neither principal and interest would ever be demanded. The consequences of this plausible and seductive doctrine were promptly manifested in the form of numerous applications for legislative authority to municipal bodies to subscribe for the stock of the Pennsylvania State Press. These applications were all granted, and the State was thus enabled to carry out its policy of promoting public convenience and the general prosperity, and a number of laws of this character were enacted. So far as these apply to cities and boroughs, their operation has been rather successful; but when applied to counties, it has certainly been much less so; falling entirely upon the instances, and in others leading to violent controversies amongst the people, destructive to the public interest, and in some cases, viewed in every aspect, as a mere question of expediency; the experiment is not likely to be repeated, and I would heartily recommend the policy of such subscriptions to be discontinued, and especially its extension to counties, has been greatly strengthened by this experience; and we should now, it seems to me, be contented with the policy of the State, and avoid the practice in future.

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