

The Montrose Democrat

"WE ARE ALL EQUAL BEFORE GOD AND THE CONSTITUTION."—James Buchanan

McCullum & Gerritson, Proprietors.

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GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

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

It appears that during the past fiscal year the sum of three hundred and sixty thousand one hundred and fifty-eight dollars and ninety-seven cents has been paid in liquidation of the public debt. This taken in connection with the fact that during the year ending November 30th, 1855, six hundred and thirty thousand six hundred and one dollars and two cents were paid on the same account, exhibits the gratifying fact, that the process of reducing the public debt has commenced; and, unless checked by reckless mismanagement and extravagant expenditure, must continue, until the people and the Commonwealth are relieved from the debt and taxation with which they are burdened. In addition to this reduction of the public debt, large appropriations and payments were made for the completion of the Portage Railroad and for debts previously contracted on that work—for old and unsettled claims recently adjudged by the Commissioners appointed under the act of last session—for relaying the south track of the Columbia Railroad—for enlarging the Delaware Division of the canal, and for other purposes. These extraordinary demands upon the Treasury have, or will soon cause, with the necessity that created them; and thus have a still larger portion of the revenue to be applied in payment of the public debt.

A careful examination of the financial condition of the Commonwealth—her sources of revenue and the probable future expenditures, has inspired the hope that the time is not far distant when the public debt will be fully paid, and this without increasing the subjects or ratio of taxation. It has already been shown that the revenue of the past year exceeded the ordinary expenditures one million two hundred and sixty-five thousand nine hundred and fifty-six cents. The estimated receipts and expenditures for the current year which will be presented to you in the report of the State Treasurer, show that the excess of receipts over ordinary expenditures may reach the sum of one and a half millions of dollars. These estimates, although approximations, will not be far from the result. The expenditure of four hundred thousand dollars for annual extraordinary expenditures—and under a wise system of economy in no probable contingency can they exceed that sum—we will have at least one million of dollars to be appropriated annually for the payment of the public debt. With the rapid development of the wealth and resources of the Commonwealth—the increase of population—the value of real estate, and of the amount and value of property of every description, the revenue must and will continue to increase. This natural and necessary increase of revenue will supply every deficiency and every demand upon the Treasury that falls within the range of probability. If, then, the sum of one million of dollars be appropriated annually in liquidation of this debt, and the accruing interest on the same paid in the manner of a sinking fund, the entire indebtedness of the Commonwealth will be extinguished in less than twenty-three years. If these premises are correct, and their correctness can only be impaired by unwise legislation, or the imprudent management of our finances—the truth of the proposition is susceptible of the clearest demonstration. Assuming the public debt on the first day of December, 1856, to be, in round numbers, forty millions five hundred thousand dollars, and that at the end of each year one million dollars will be applied in paying interest on former payments, will pay, unerring calculation will determine the result to be as before indicated. Thus, before the expiration of the year 1879, Pennsylvania may stand redeemed from the oppression of her public debt, and her people be released from a taxation imposed to meet its accruing interest, and to maintain the faith and credit of the Commonwealth. These views are not utopian. By practicing strict economy in the management of the Government, avoiding extravagant expenditures—refusing to undertake any new schemes of internal improvement, and holding to a rigid accountability the receiving and disbursing agent of the State, their realization may be anticipated with confidence.

I must again call the attention of the Legislature to a subject referred to in my last annual message, in the following terms: By the thirty-eighth section of the Act of the 16th of April, 1845, entitled "An Act to provide for the ordinary expenses of Government, the repairs of the canals and railroads of the State, and other claims upon the Commonwealth," the Governor was authorized to cause certificates of State stock to be issued to all persons or bodies corporate holding certificates for the payment of interest on the funded debt of the State which fell due on the first day of August, 1842, the first days of February and August, 1843, and the first days of February and August, 1844, in an amount equal to the amount of certificates so held, upon their delivering up said certificates to the Auditor General. In pursuance of this authority thus given, certificates of State stock to the amount of four millions one hundred and fifty thousand, one hundred and fifty dollars and twenty cents, bearing interest at the rate of five per cent. per annum, payable semi-annually on the first days of February and August in each year, and redeemable on or after the first day of August, 1855, were issued. The minimum period fixed by law for the redemption of these certificates expired on the first day of August, 1855. No provision has been made for their renewal or redemption.

Although by the terms of the Act authorizing these certificates of State stock, as also by the conditions of the certificates issued in pursuance thereof, the time of payment, after the expiration of the minimum period, is optional with the debtor, the Commonwealth, yet a due regard for the credit of the State requires that provisions should be made for their renewal or redemption. To redeem these certificates, a loan would be necessary, and as a loan cannot be effected, in the present financial condition of the country, on terms more favorable to the State, than those on which these certificates were issued, I would recommend that authority be given to issue the bonds of the Commonwealth in renewal of said certificates, bearing interest at the rate of five per cent. per annum, payable semi-annually, and redeemable on or after the expiration of twenty years; and that the bonds be issued with coupons or certificates of interest attached, in sums equal in amount to the semi-annual interest thereon, payable on the first days of February and August in each and every year, at such places as may be designated. This change in the form and

character of the certificates, it is believed, will be so advantageous to the holders, without increasing the liabilities of the Commonwealth, as to induce a willing and prompt exchange, at a premium for the bonds proposed to be issued.

The report of the Canal Commissioners will be laid before you, and will exhibit in detail the condition of the public works—their general operation, and the receipts and expenditures for the past fiscal year. The total receipts at the Treasury, from the public works, for the year ending November 30th, 1856, were \$2,000,015 66, being an increase over the revenues of the previous year of \$63,838 95. Of this sum \$1,013,589 16 were canal and bridge tolls, and \$992,426 50 tolls of the Columbia and Portage Railroads.

The aggregate expenditures for the same year were \$1,948,806 82, being an increase over those of the previous year of \$105,105 04, the revenues exceeding the expenditures only \$62,118 84.

The increase of the revenues from these works would be encouraging, were it not for the fact that the expenditures have increased in a still greater proportion—the expenditures, ordinary and extraordinary, exhausting almost the entire revenue from this source. The system must be defective, or more care and economy should be exercised in its management.

The receipts, at the Treasury, from the several divisions, were as follows, viz: Main Line.....\$1,229,272 86 Susquehanna, North Branch and West Branch..... 426,820 51 Delaware..... 349,922 29 Total receipts.....\$2,006,015 66

The extraordinary payments during the year amounted to \$608,692 16; ordinary expenditures \$1,340,114 66; (excluding extraordinary payments and for motive power) \$871,011 00.

On the Main Line, the tolls received at the Treasury from the Columbia road were \$991,679 50; expenditures \$528,084 66; tolls on the Eastern Division of canal, from Columbia to the Junction, \$117,718 36; expenditures \$53,048 50; receipts from the Junction to Pittsburg, including the Portage Railroad, \$117,778 00; ordinary expenditures \$702 22. The total receipts on the Main Line were \$1,229,272 86; aggregate expenditures, (excluding \$207,000 00 paid for relaying the south track of the Columbia Railroad, and \$158,049 42 for motive power in 1855, and after December 1st, 1856,) were \$885,835 65, being an excess of revenue over ordinary expenditures of \$343,437 21.

Although the receipts from the Delaware Division are less than those of the previous year, yet the general result of its operations is satisfactory. The net revenue at the Treasury was \$264,095 40. Its management has been characterized by a degree of economy too seldom practiced on some of the lines of our improvements.

However important this Division may be to the trade and business of that portion of the State, its proposed enlargement should not be undertaken, unless demanded by reason of overall necessity. The experience of the past, as connected with the Allegheny Portage Railroad, and the North Branch Extension, should warn us against undertaking, without great caution, any new measure of improvement, which may drain the Treasury, without aiding materially, if at all, the public interests. If kept in good order by efficient and timely repairs, its capacity will be fully equal to all the demands of its trade & business.

The Portage Railroad is not fully completed. A small additional appropriation, yet to be required to complete, for the fourth time, this road. It is anxiously hoped that this unproductive improvement may soon cease its moribund demands upon the Treasury. Every year's experience more clearly reveals the impolicy of the State in undertaking this work.

It gives me no ordinary pleasure to inform you that the North Branch Extension of the Pennsylvania Canal has been successfully completed, that boats freighted with coal and other products, were successfully passed through its entire length from Pittston to the Junction Canal. This work was commenced in 1836—suspended in 1841—resumed in 1849, and finished in 1856; although its completion was officially announced in 1853. It extends from Pittston to the New York State Line, a distance of about twenty-four miles, following the course of the Susquehanna to Athens, and thence along the Chemung river to the State line, where it joins the "Junction Canal," and is thus connected with the New York Improvements.

The importance and value of this improvement cannot easily be over-estimated. Passing through one of the richest mineral and agricultural portions of the State, it offers to the immense and valuable products of that region, a safe and direct transit to the markets of New York, Baltimore and Philadelphia. In the completion of this canal, the difficulties to be overcome, and the labor to be performed were great. Both these, to a great extent, have been accomplished under the superintendency of Wm. R. Maft, Esq., to whom this work was assigned.

This canal, although completed, and before the close of navigation, used for the purpose of transportation, is not perfect. Sinks in the bottom, from the nature of the formation and soils through which it passes, slides from the hills, and breaches may occur, but these after a few years of well applied labor, will be diminished, and by vigilance and care entirely prevented.

This improvement, although subject to the rivalry of competing railroads, if kept in good condition, under proper management, will receive its full share of coal and other tonnage. It is anticipated that the revenues, for the current year, will equal, if not exceed, the expenditures; and increasing with the facilities afforded, and the rapid development of trade, will, instead of its heretofore onerous demands upon the Treasury take precedence in revenue over any canal in the Commonwealth.

In relation to the propriety and policy of the sale of the Main Line of our public improvements, my opinion has not changed. Every consideration of public-policy, of present and future interest, requires the separation of the State from the management and control of these works. The expenditures on that portion of the line, between the Junction and Pittsburg, largely exceed the revenues, the excess averaging annually not less than one hundred and fifty thousand dollars; and causes are of constant operation that will

still more increase this deficiency. This continual drain upon the Treasury to sustain a work so unproductive, should at once be checked. A sale of the Main Line, for a fair consideration, and upon terms just and liberal to the purchasers, is the proper remedy. Such sale, on terms amply protective of the rights and interest of the people, can, by proper legislation be effected. In connection with the payment of the public debt, this question becomes deeply important. The sale would constitute a new era in the financial history of the State, and assure a still more speedy reduction of the public debt, than that to which reference has been made. The subject is earnestly commended to your favorable consideration.

The subject of banks and banking capital in its relations to the currency—the general interests of trade and commerce, and the interests of the citizen, deserve your careful attention. My views expressed in a former communication remain unchanged. The incorporation of new, or the recharter of old and solvent banks, when really necessary, and demanded by the wants of legitimate trade in the community, where located, should be favored; under no other circumstances should either be permitted. In the charter of banks and brokers, and in the laws and the people should be consulted; and a just discrimination as to number, locality and the demands of trade be exercised.

The rapid increase of population, the importance and value of our home and foreign commerce, the constant development of the material wealth of the State, the extent of our manufacturing, mechanical and agricultural industry, the fact that the State is loaded by a dependent currency introduced by private bankers and brokers, and the increasing restrictions and limitations indicated, a judicious increase of banking capital within our Commonwealth. This, whilst it would aid the operations of trade, and supply the real business wants of the people, would, at the same time, remedy, to some extent, the evils of a depreciated foreign and illegal currency.

The Act approved the 6th day of November last, the thirtieth section of the Act of 1850, regulating banks, will be, after the first day of July next, extended to all incorporated saving fund, trust and insurance companies. That section declares "that it shall not be lawful for any of the said banks to issue or pay out any bank notes other than those issued by itself, payable on demand in gold or silver; notes of specie paying banks of the State which are taken in deposit or in payment of debts, at par at the counter of the bank where paid out; or notes of banks issued under the authority of the Act of the 4th of May, 1841, at the option of the person receiving the same."

These enactments were intended to protect the community against the evils of a depreciated currency, and prevent its introduction from other States. However well intended these laws be—these objects, unless the State, whose profits are largely dependent upon the introduction into the State of such a currency. In many instances the notes of our own banks are collected by private bankers and brokers, and with these, and the specie withdrawn from the banks issuing them, they purchase depreciated and foreign bank paper which is paid out at par at their counters. By others large loans are negotiated which are taken in deposit or in payment of debts, at par at the counter of the bank where paid out; or notes of banks issued under the authority of the Act of the 4th of May, 1841, at the option of the person receiving the same.

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The effect of this system of private banking has been to limit the circulation of the paper of our own banks, and to substitute a foreign currency, circulated, and often a worthless currency, in justice to the Bank, Trust and Insurance Companies, paying a heavy annual tax to the Commonwealth for their privileges, and for the protection of the people against these evils, either the provisions of the thirtieth section of the Act of 1850, should be repealed, or further extended so as to embrace private individuals and associations, who may monopolize and control the circulation of the public, this trade in depreciated bank paper, without restraint and without taxation.

The Report of the Superintendent of Common Schools will exhibit to you the number and condition of the Schools—the number of teachers and scholars, and the general operations of the system during the past year. To the valuable statistical information of the report, and the useful suggestions for the improvement of the system, I invite your early and intelligent consideration.

From a small and comparatively unimportant incident in the State Department, the care and management of the public schools of the Commonwealth, with their seventeen hundred districts—ten thousand directors—twelve thousand teachers, and over five hundred thousand scholars, have become the most important and laborious branch of that Department. The increased and increasing business of the system, has been met by a corresponding increase of zeal, labor, and efficiency in the officers to whom the law has committed its general direction and supervision. They should be sustained by wise and generous legislation. The magnitude and importance of the system, in its political, social, and moral relations to the present and future of the people, require that this should be done. The guardianship of the mind of the State, should occupy a distinct and prominent place among the noble institutions of the Commonwealth. It should receive the efficient aid and encouragement of the government, and be sustained by a virtuous and intelligent people. If the revenue and treasure of the State—her public improvements—her lands and other titles—care and deserve the marked and distinctive care of the government, how much more should her mental and intellectual treasures, richer than gold—the social and moral improvement of her people, more valuable than canals and railways—the titles of her youth to the boundless fields of knowledge, higher than any of earth's gifts, growing out of its ownship, claim a humane position, and receive a care and aid commensurate with their greater value and usefulness.

The County Superintendent, wherever it has been committed to faithful and efficient hands, has fully vindicated the wisdom and policy of that measure. It is slowly, but surely, removing the prejudices and gaining the confidence of the people. Whatever de-

fects time and experience may develop, in this or any other branch of the system, should be promptly corrected. But until the necessity for change is established, the system, in its unity and integrity, should be maintained; and if changed, changed only to render more certain the accomplishment of its noble purposes and objects.

A sufficient number of competent and well-trained teachers is the great want of the system. In its structure and organization it is as perfect, if not more so, than any of the systems of our sister States. But the teacher is wanted to give it proper vitality and efficiency—to develop its true force and value—to secure the great object of its creation, the thorough education of the youth of the Commonwealth. How can this want be supplied? How are teachers to be trained and provided to meet this educational demand? Must we depend upon the training schools of our sister States? Must our system be jeopardized, and its success perilled, by waiting the slow and unaided efforts of voluntary associations to furnish the much needed teacher? Voluntary associations of common school teachers have accomplished much in their disinterested and noble efforts to remedy this defect. They are worthy the highest commendation—they deserve every encouragement. They can and will do more; but unaided they cannot accomplish the object desired. The Legislature must provide the remedy—they can supply the deficiency. It should be done promptly and effectually. No subject of greater interest can occupy your attention as legislators—no one appeals more earnestly to duty and patriotism.

In a former communication to the Legislature the establishment of State normal schools, for the education of teachers, was urged as an indispensable necessary to the perfection of the system. With full confidence in their utility and necessity, I again recommend them. These institutions, with their proper Professors, and appliances, supported by the State, would meet the wants and elevate the character of our common schools.

Teacher's institutes, as auxiliary to Normal Schools, when in operation, and supplying their place, should be established, should be aided by the State. One such institute in each county, meeting annually, under the fostering care of the Government, would be productive of most beneficial results. Whilst it would improve teachers and prepare them for their important and responsible duties, it would elevate and dignify a profession too long neglected and undervalued by those most deeply interested in their honorable labors. These institutes, as an addition to the annual State appropriation for common schools, in an amount limited only by the necessities of the Treasury, would give energy to the system—increase its efficiency—and thus promote the true interests of the people and the Commonwealth.

Our educational, charitable and reformatory institutions have strong claims upon the bounty of the people, and I cordially commend them to your care and liberality. The State Lunatic Asylum at Harrisburg, and the Western Pennsylvania Hospital for the Insane, and other kindred institutions at Pittsburg, are noble charities, and deserve the aid and encouragement of the State. The annual reports of these institutions will be laid before you, and will exhibit in detail their operations during the past year.

The House of Refuge in Philadelphia, and the Western House of Refuge near Pittsburg, are institutions of great excellence, and the results clearly evince the wisdom of the policy that founded and sustains them. Their aid ought not to be neglected; nor should the aid of the Commonwealth be withheld from them.

The "Blind" and the "Deaf and Dumb" Asylums at Philadelphia; and the "Pennsylvania training school for idiots and feeble minded children" are institutions that appeal, in silence and sorrow, to the best and purest feelings of the heart, and ask your sympathy and aid. These institutions receive a generous share of the beneficence of the State.

Agriculture, in its varied departments, is the great interest of the Commonwealth. It is the basis alike of financial and commercial success, and of State and national prosperity. An interest so important should be fostered by the State, and honored by all classes of society. To its promotion and success all should cheerfully contribute. In a former communication I recommended the establishment of an agricultural bureau, in connection with some one of the State Departments, to give efficiency to the collection and diffusion of useful knowledge on this subject, and to encourage scientific and practical agriculture. Science, with wondrous energy, has aided the husbandman in his honorable vocation, and professors still more help. The State should nerve his arm and cheer him onward in this, the first and noblest pursuit of man. This object in connection with an appropriation to the "Farmer's High School" in Pennsylvania—an institution destined to be an honor to the Commonwealth—is recommended to your favorable consideration.

The "Polytechnic College of Pennsylvania," established by the enterprise and liberality of some of the patriotic citizens of Philadelphia, as a school of the applied sciences, deserves honorable mention, and should receive the confidence and patronage of the public. In the teachings of this Institution, literature, science and art, in happy union, meet to prepare our young men for the practical business of life, for mining, mechanical and civil engineering, and for promoting intelligently and efficiently the great interests of manufacturing and agricultural industry.

The laws on the statute book regulating manufacturing and improvement companies, require revision. They are unnecessarily stringent in many of their provisions, and thus defeat the object of their enactment. They drive capital from the State, instead of inviting its investment here; and instead of encouraging individual and associated enterprise and energy in the development of our immense natural resources, they bind and crush both by severe restrictions—unwise limitations and personal liabilities. The subject deserves careful attention and liberal legislation.

I have so frequently expressed my views in relation to local, special and "omnibus" legislation, that their repetition now becomes unnecessary. Legislation, so far as practical, should be general and uniform. Local and special legislation, when the object desired can be secured by general laws, or by the action of the Courts, should be avoided. "Omnibus Legislation" cannot under any circumstances be justified or approved. Too much legislation is an evil that prevails or

tenaciously in Legislative Halls. Its avoidance would not be injurious to public or private interests.

The practice of delaying the passage of the general appropriation bill until the last days of the session, and incorporating in it provisions incompatible with its general character, and obnoxious when standing alone, to insurmountable objections, is highly censurable and should be discontinued. The attempt thus made to force, by a species of legislative jugglery, the passage of objectionable measures through the Legislature, and compel their sanction by the Executive, has been too often successful. The practice cannot be too strongly condemned—it cannot receive my sanction.

The militia law of the State is imperfect in many of its provisions, and should be revised. The powers and duties of the Commander-in-Chief should be more clearly defined; as also the duties of the officers connected with the military organization of the Commonwealth. This is necessary to prevent a conflict of jurisdiction with other departments of the government, and to give greater efficiency to our military system. Volunteer companies should be encouraged—our entire military system should be remodeled, and made to occupy that honorable position which from its importance and necessity it deserves.

After the sale of the State Arsenal to the Legislature, I transmitted to that body an ordinance passed by the Select and Common Councils of the City of Philadelphia, approved by the Mayor on the 7th of April, 1856, and officially communicated to me, proposing to convey to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, a lot of ground in that city, for the purpose of erecting thereon a State Arsenal. Want of time alone prevented action on the proposition then submitted. The ground thus offered to the State is valuable and its location most eligible for the purpose intended. The conditions of the proposed grant are favorable to the State, and highly creditable to the municipal authorities of Philadelphia, evincing a liberality and public spirit worthy of all commendation. The necessity of a State arsenal in that city is so apparent that the subject needs no elaboration in this communication. After the sale of the State Arsenal in Philadelphia, the public arms were deposited in an old building, or out house, unsafe and unfit as a depository for public property. The sum of \$30,000, realized from that sale is now in the Treasury; and by the 55th section of an act passed the 10th day of April, 1853, entitled "An Act to provide for the ordinary expenses of Government," &c., the Governor was authorized to apply the same to the purchase of a lot of ground, and to the erection of an arsenal thereon. This sum was found insufficient for these purposes, and consequently the object intended by the appropriation has not been accomplished. By the cession of this lot, the State will be relieved from the expenditure of any money for the purchase of suitable grounds; and the entire sum of \$30,000 may be applied to the erection of the necessary buildings; to which sum can be added, if deemed advisable, the amount that may be realized from a sale of the arsenal at Meadville and Harrisburg, as recommended in my last annual Message. These sums would be amply sufficient to accomplish this object.

I would therefore again recommend the immediate passage of a bill accepting the conveyance of the said lot of ground from the city of Philadelphia, for the purposes and upon the terms and conditions contained in the ordinance; and that the sum of \$30,000 be appropriated for the erection of a State Arsenal thereon.

On the sixth day of October, 1855, I approved and signed a bill, entitled "An Act to repeal the charter of the Erie and North East Railroad Company, and to provide for its disposal of the same." In pursuance of its provisions, Hon. Joseph Casey was appointed to take possession and have the charge and custody of the road. Before possession was taken by the company, and by the company, to one of the Judges of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, for an injunction to restrain the agent of the State from taking possession; and subsequently a cautionary order was made by the Supreme Court, in banc, to stay proceedings under the act. The questions then pending before that court were determined in favor of the Commonwealth—the constitutionality of the act sustained, and the application for an injunction refused. Possession of the road was then taken by the agent of the State, as directed by law.

On the 22nd day of April 1856, an act entitled "An Act supplementary to the act incorporating the Erie and North East Railroad Company," was passed. By this act the Erie and North East Railroad, as originally located and constructed, was legalized and confirmed; and certain changes in the road, were directed to be made, and other acts to be done by the company. It was also provided that the Governor shall retain possession of the Erie and North East Railroad, under the act of the 6th of October 1855, until the provisions of this act shall have been accepted by a vote of the stockholders of the Erie and North East Railroad Company, at a meeting called for that purpose. On the 15th day of May, 1856, at a meeting of the stockholders called for that purpose, the provisions of the act were accepted by their vote. This acceptance, duly certified, was received and filed in this department on the 15th of July last. Possession of the road has been restored, and it is now under the care and management of the company. A final account for money received from the road, whilst in possession of the State, will be settled with the company at the earliest practicable period. It is but proper to state that since the acceptance of the act of the 22nd of April, 1856, a writ of error, in the case adjudicated by the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, has been issued at the suit of the company by the Supreme Court of the United States, and is now pending in that Court.

The Commissioner first appointed having resigned, A. K. McClure, Esq., was appointed in his place. The duties of both officers were able and faithfully performed. Copies of their correspondence and reports, herewith submitted to the House of Representatives, for the use of the Legislature, will furnish information in detail on the subject now under consideration.

It is strenuously desired that good faith & honesty of purpose may characterize the conduct of this company in the discharge of the duties assumed by their acceptance of the act of the 22d of April last, and that this much valued question will not again disturb the harmony or retard the prosperity of the city of Erie, or

any other portion of this Commonwealth. The resolution proposing amendments to the Constitution of the Commonwealth, have been published as directed by that instrument. It will be your duty to take such action in reference to these amendments as, in your judgment, be most consistent with the wishes of the people. An appropriation will be required to pay the expenses of their publication, and to this your earliest attention is requested.

The important duty of directing the State for the election of Senators and Representatives, will devolve upon you. This duty should be performed faithfully, and with strict reference to the interests and rights of the whole people. Returns of taxables, required to be made by the different counties, have not all been forwarded to this department, as by law directed. Circulars have been issued to the officers charged with these duties, urging their speedy performance, and the returns, as soon as received, be transmitted to you.

The elective franchise is the highest and most responsible privilege enjoyed by the American citizen. Involving in its exercise the sovereignty of the people, and constituting as it does the substratum of our free institutions, it cannot be too highly appreciated or carefully guarded. The ballot box through which the people express their will, should be preserved from violation at every hazard and sacrifice. Upon its purity and integrity depend the existence of our republican government, and the rights and privileges of the citizen. Every legal voter, whatever may be his political affluence or party predilections is deeply interested in this question. Any attempt to sully its purity, or impair its efficiency, whether by violence or fraud, should be sternly resisted and severely punished. Illegal voting whether founded on forgery or perjury, or both; on false assessments of false and forged certificates of naturalization, is an evil that deserves the severest condemnation. It prevents an honest expression of the popular will, corrupts the sources of legitimate power and influence, and strikes a fatal blow at the cherished rights of freedom. These evils are alleged to exist in our large cities—the rural districts of the State are comparatively free from such corrupting abuses. A remedy co-extensive with the evil should be provided. Every defence should be thrown around the ballot box, and whilst the rights of legal voters should be secured and protected, fraud in every form should be prevented and punished. Whether a judicious registry law, or some other measure of reform, adequate to the necessities of the case, should be adopted is referred to the wisdom of the Legislature.

As appropriate to this subject, the reform of the naturalization laws—the prevention by the National Government, of the importation of foreign criminals and paupers, and a more careful, rigid and personal examination, by our courts, of all persons coming before them as applicants for admission to the rights of citizenship, would, to some extent, correct existing abuses, and relieve the ballot-box from the pressure of corrupting and dangerous influences.

To the policy and acts of the National Government, affecting, as they do, the rights and interests of the Commonwealth, the people of the State cannot be indifferent. Pennsylvania, occupying a high and conservative position in the sisterhood of States—devoted to the Constitution and the Union, in their integrity and harmony, has been, and will ever be, ready to recognize the rights of her sister States to defend her own. The sentiment she has never abandoned—she exemplifies she has never violated. Pledges to the maintenance of the rights of the North, as well as those of the South—sincerely desirous to promote the peace, harmony and welfare of our whole country—and disclaiming all intention or desire to interfere with the Constitutional rights of the States, or their Constitutions—institutions—the people of this Commonwealth are ready to affirm and apprehension the repeal of the Missouri compromise—a compromise rendered sacred by public esteem by its association and connection with the great cause of national harmony and union—regarding it as a palpable violation of the pledged faith and honor of the Nation, and as an unwarrantable attempt to extend the institution of domestic slavery to territories then free. This reckless and indecisive act of our National Congress, has not only aroused sectional jealousies and renewed the agitation of vexed and distasteful questions, but, as a consequence, it has filled Kansas with fraud, violence and strife, has stained its soil with blood, and by a system of territorial legislation, justly styled "infamous," has made freedom of speech and of the press a felony, and perilled the great principles of liberty and equal rights. If the doctrine of "popular sovereignty" is in good faith to be applied to that Territory—if the people thereof are to be left to determine for themselves and regulate their domestic institutions in their own way, subject only to the Constitution of the United States; then the obstruction of the great National highways of the Northern emigrant, the employment of the National force, and the subversion of law and justice alike by the officials in Kansas and Washington, to force slavery upon an unwilling people, cannot be too severely condemned.

Freedom is the great centre-truth of American Republicanism—the great law of American Nationality; Slavery is the exception. It is local and sectional; and its extension beyond the jurisdiction creating it or to the free territories of the Union, was never designed or contemplated by the patriot founders of the Republic. In accordance with these sentiments, Pennsylvania, true to the principle of the Act of 1780, which abolished Slavery within her territorial limits—true to the great doctrines of the Ordinance of 1787, which dedicated to freedom the North Western territory of the Union—true to National faith and National honor, asks and expects, as due to her own citizens who have in good faith settled in the Territory of Kansas, and as due to the industry and energy of a free people, that Kansas should be free.

In this connection, and as consequent upon the repeal of the Missouri Compromise, reference to a proposition made by some of the leading Southern journals, and more recently sanctioned by high official authority, to re-open the African slave trade in a western State, to reopen the African slave trade, will not be deemed improper. That such traffic, declared to be Piracy, and escorted by the civilized world—so crowded with horrors in every stage of its progress, so revolting to every sentiment of humanity, so every impulse of pure and noble feeling, should

FUNDED DEBT.	
6 per cent. loan	\$516,154 93
5 do do	38,904 04
4 1/2 do do	388,200 00
4 do do	100,000 00
Total F'd debt	\$399,907,799 97

UNFUNDED DEBT.	
Relief notes in circulation	\$258,773 00
Interest certificates outstanding	29,157 25
Domestic credits	1,264 00
Bal. of temporary loan April 19th, 1853	925,000 00
Bal. of temporary loan May 9th, 1854	346,000 00
Total unf'd debt	\$1,160,194 25

The funded and unfunded debt at the close of the fiscal year, Dec. 1st, 1856, was as follows, viz:	
6 per cent. loan	\$511,781 00
5 do do	38,866,994 80
4 1/2 do do	388,200 00
4 do do	100,000 00
Total F'd debt	\$399,866,975 80

UNFUNDED DEBT, VIZ:	
Relief notes in circulation	\$250,656 00
Interest certificates outstanding	24,691 37
Interest certificates uncollected	4,448 38
Domestic credits	1,164 00
Bal. of temporary loan April 19th, 1853	400,000 00
Bal. of temporary loan May 9th, 1854	184,000 00
Total unf'd debt	\$31,859 75
Total F'd Dec. 1st, 1856	\$41,067,994 29
do do do	\$41,067,925 25
Decrease	\$396,159 07