GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

READ IN BOTH HOUSES JAN. 6, 12 O'CLOCK.

To the Senate and House of Representatives:

GENTLEMEN:—The Legislature has assembled at a time which is distinguished for the general health and prosperity of the people.

While we deplore the wants and wretchedness of numbers of our race, resulting principally from the influence of unjust governments, we are enabled, by comparing our condition with theirs, to appreciate the inestimable value of our own free institutions, and are moved to unite our grateful hearts in adoration and praise for the wonderful goodness of our Heavenly Father, who has multiplied our civil and religious blessings, and has not only preserved us from the horrors of want, but has enabled us, out of our abundance, to feed the hungry, and has made us a great and a happy people.

Since the last adjournment of the General Assembly, the peace which had so long subsisted between this nation and the other nations of the world, has been disturbed by the war between the United States and Mexico. The grave causes which have produced this rupture are ably and satisfactorily set forth in the late annual message of the President to Congress. They show a dignified forbearance on the part of this government, under multiplied wrongs and aggressions, and a laudable desire to preserve peace while its blessings could be secured consistently with the national honor. A free people, conscious that they ask nothing but what is right, cannot submit to wrong, and however much they may deprecate the evils of war, their just rights must be maintained. Hence Congress, on the 13th of May, 1846, announced, that, by the act of Mexico, a state of war existed between that government and the United States; and for the purpose of prosecuting it to a speedy and successful termination, the President was authorized to employ the militia, naval and military forces of the United States, and to call for and accept the services of fifty thousand volunteers.

In pursuance of the authority derived from this act, the President, on the 19th of May, 1846, requested the Executive of this State to be enrolled and held in readiness, for muster into the service of the United States, six regiments of volunteer infantry, each to consist of ten companies, to serve for twelve months, or to the end of the war, unless sooner discharged.

In accordance with this request, general orders were issued on the 23d of May, 1846, announcing to the citizen soldiers that the offer of six regiments of volunteer infantry would be accepted, to be held in readiness for muster into the service of the United States. In pursuance of this announcement, the offers of ninety companies of volunteer infantry, sufficient to fill nine regiments, were received and transmitted on the 15th day of July, 1846, to the War Department. The patriotism and zeal which were so promptly and cheerfully manifested on this occasion, by the volunteers of Pennsylvania, give proof of their devotion to the service of the country, highly creditable to themselves and honorable to the State.

The six regiments thus called for, were not mustered into the service.

On the 10th of November, 1846, a request was made by the President for one regiment of volunteers from this State, to consist of ten companies, to be continued in service during the war with Mexico, unless sooner discharged. This request was announced on the 18th of November, 1846, to the volunteers who had previously tendered their services, and the regiment was promptly filled and mustered into the service of the United States at Pittsburgh, on the 13th day of December. Six of the companies composing the regiment, were organized in Philadelphia; one in Pottsville; one in Wilkesbarre, and two in Pittsburgh.

On the 14th December, 1846, a request was made by the President for another regiment of Volunteer infantry from this State, to serve during the war with Mexico, unless sooner discharged. This regiment was filled, even with more promptitude than the former, and ordered to rendezvous at Pittsburgh, on the 5th inst. One of the companies composing this regiment, was organized in Philadelphia; one in Reading; one in Mauch Chunk; one in Harrisburgh; one in Danville; two in Cambria county; one in Westmoreland county; one in Fayette county, and one in Pittsburgh.

The energy and the exalted patriotism which have thus been evinced by the citizen soldiery of Pennsylvania, are an admirable illustration of the workings of our free system, and of the strength of our government.

The officers and soldiers who have entered into the service of the country, are independent freemen, in the vigor of youth and manhood, intelligent and energetic, animated with the love of liberty and proud of the dignity of being citizens of the United States. Such are the Volunteer soldiers of Pennsylvania, who have filled two regiments, and are ready to furnish any additional number that may be required.

In referring to the manly zeal of the soldier, allusion to the benevolence of the citizens who provided for their comfort on the march, and who became the guardians of those they left behind, and were dependent upon them, cannot be omitted.—Those generous feelings, so admirably expressed, in which woman mingled the fulness of her patriotism, and the charms of her influence, as a halo around the volunteer, when with lingering looks at the loved objects of home, he commenced his wintry march for the seat of war, and gave him the assurance that the blessings of the soldier's friends—of the whole country, were upon him, and their protecting care around his family.

That compensation, in addition to the small allowance made by the laws of the United States, should be provided for these brave men, who have devoted themselves to the country, is most reasonable. I submit, respectfully, to the General Assembly, the propriety and justice of invoking Congress to appropriate for their use, such portion of the public land as may be sufficient to furnish a competent freehold to each of the officers and soldiers, who have, in compliance with the request of the President, volunteered to serve in the war with Mexico, and are mustered into the service of the United States. A better disposition could not, in my opinion, be made of a part of the public domain.

It is to be regretted that, as the contingency which has arisen was not foreseen, there was no provision made by the Legislature, for defraying the expenses of the marching the volunteers to the place of rendezvous. The allowance made by the general government, for this purpose, was little more than sufficient, with the most rigid economy, to pay the cost of transportation. These men were hurried from their homes, with little time for preparation, and when they arrived and were mustered into the service, the small sum for defraying their traveling expenses, which was their only compensation up to that period, was nearly exhausted. I submit to the General Assembly, the propriety and justice of refunding to them, the expenses of the march to Pittsburgh. The sacrifices they have made, and the spirit they have evinced, merits, in my opinion, this small acknowledgement from the representatives of the people.

It is proper to add, that, although this subject has been presented to the general government, no provision has yet been made to defray the expenses incurred by the volunteers, in preparing themselves for muster into the service, under the request of the President, of the 19th of May, last.—This subject, too, is worthy of the immediate consideration of the General Assembly.

A detailed report of the proceedings in the State, for organizing the troops, to serve in the Mexican war, will be made as early as practicable by the Adjutant General, and submitted, as soon as it is received, to the General Assembly.

In connection with this subject, it is my duty to state, that, to the industry and ability of Adjutant General Bowman, and his Assistant, Colonel Petriken, I have been essentially indebted, for the prompt, methodical and satisfactory arrangements, by means of which the duty that devolved upon me, in the organization of these troops, has been performed; and as existing laws make no provision, I respectfully submit, that suitable compensation for the services which have been rendered, should be promptly made to these officers.

The debt, and finances of the Commonwealth, present one of the most interesting subjects that can engage the attention of the Legislature.

The following is an exhibit of the State debt, on the 1st of December last, as appears from the Report of the Auditor General:

Total funded debt,	$38,858,970 52
Relief notes in circulation,	1,061 661 00
Interest certificates, outstanding,	703,810 69
Interest certificates, unclaimed,	4,433 11
Interest on certificates, to August 1, 1845, when funded,	44,423 21
Domestic creditors,	96,275 47
Total public debt, on the 1st Dec., 1840.	$40,789,577 00

Being $196,816 22 less than it was on 1st December, 1845.

The payment of the interest on the funded debt had been suspended for two years and a half preceding the 1st of February, 1845, for which certificates were issued, which constitute a part of the existing debt. In consequence of the non-payment of the interest, the balance in the Treasury had accumulated on the 1st of December, 1844, to the sum of $664,851 88; and on the 1st day of February, 1845, the payment of the interest on the funded debt was resumed, and has been continued up to the present period, and the credit and honor of the State maintained. This is a source of high gratification to our citizens, and has tended greatly to restore our good old Commonwealth, to the elevated and proud position she formerly occupied, and which, I trust, she is destined to occupy for all time to come.

While, however, we mingle our congratulations upon this comparatively prosperous state of affairs, it is proper that the true condition of our resources should be accurately and critically examined, and always kept in view, not only to guard by ample provisions against the possibility of another failure punctually to meet all the demands upon the public Treasury, but to make provision for the commencement of a system for reducing the public debt.

It has been my constant endeavor, especially in the annual message of January last, and the special message of the 21st of April, following, to impress upon the representatives of the people, the necessity and importance of this subject. In presenting it to the Legislature, at the last session, it became my duty to show that the taxes assessed on real and personal estate, together with all the other revenue that accrued within the fiscal year, ending on the 30th of November, 1845, were less than the expenditures of the year, by the sum of $414,199 32, which deficit was supplied out of the balance in the treasury on the 1st of December, 1844, and by a diminution of the outstanding taxes. Thus,

On 1st Dec., 1844, the balance in the Treasury was	$663,851 88
And on 1st Dec., 1845, it was	384,586 09
Showing a reduction of the balance in the Treasury of	$278,965 79
On 1st Dec., '44, the estimated am't of available outstanding taxes was	$1,009,778 03
And on 1st Dec., 1845, they were estimated at	$874,544 50
Showing a diminution of the outstanding taxes of	135,233 53
And making an aggregate diminution of the balance in the Treasury, and outstanding taxes, during the year ending 30th Nov., 1845, of	$414,199 32

This statement demonstrates that the taxes, and other revenues assessed, and accruing within the year, were less, by the above sum, than the demands upon the Treasury, during the same period.

The financial operation of the year, ending on the 30th of November, 1846, also exhibits a like deficiency, but less in amount. Thus,

The balance in the Treasury on the 1st Dec., 1845, was	$384,586 09
And the estimated amount of available taxes outstanding at the same period, was	874,544 50
Making an aggregate amount of balance in the Treasury, and outstanding taxes, on the 1st Dec., 1845, of	1,259,430 59
The balance in the Treasury on the 1st Dec., 1846, was	$381,678 70
And the estimated am't of available outstanding taxes, at the same period, was	542,088 64
Making an aggregate of the balance in Treasury, and outstanding taxes, on 1st Dec., '46, of	927,367 34
Showing a diminution of the balance in Treasury, and outstanding taxes, during the fiscal year ending Nov. 30th, 1846, of	$332,062 25

It thus appears, that the taxes assessed, and the other revenues accruing within the fiscal year just ended, were insufficient to meet the demands upon the Treasury by the above sum.

It will be perceived that the balance in the Treasury on the 1st of December, 1846, was greater than was estimated in the last annual message, and that the amount of the outstanding taxes has been reduced below the estimate then made.

As it was apparent that these recurring deficiencies would soon exhaust the balance in the Treasury, and all the arrearages of available outstanding taxes, I was impelled to urge upon the General Assembly, at their last Session, with so much earnestness, the indispensable necessity of providing some additional revenue, to place the finances of the State upon a permanent basis. Near the close of the Session, an act was passed entitled, "An act to provide for the reduction of the public debt," which embraces some additional objects of taxation, and contains provisions for enforcing, more effectually, the intention of the act of 1844. It was, however, passed at a period of the session when there was no time for deliberation, and contains some provisions, which, in my estimation, ought to be modified. It seems to me that, an attempt to tax book accounts, and moneys due on contracts, will only prove vexatious to the citizens and officers, without adding substantially to the revenue. As the act of 1845 has not yet had time to produce any practical results, no certain estimate can be made of the amount of additional revenue it will produce; but it is believed that this law, together with the increase of the value of property, since the last triennial assessment, will, if the present triennial assessment is fairly made, enlarge the revenue derivable from real and personal estate to an amount equal to the deficiency that occurred in the accruing revenue of the last year. The loss of tolls, and the additional expenditures upon the public works, occasioned by the extraordinary flood of last Spring, is a subject which may be properly noted here. By reference to the report of the Canal Commissioners, it appears that they have estimated the loss of tolls occasioned by the delay in opening the navigation, at the sum of $150,000, and that the cost of extraordinary repairs, required in consequence of injuries by the flood, was $111,515; making the aggregate loss to the State, by this unusual casualty, $261,515. If this disaster had not occurred, the accruing revenue, exclusive of the balance in the Treasury on the first of December, 1845, and the taxes then outstanding, would have been nearly equal to the demands upon the Treasury during the last fiscal year.

From the Canal Commissioners' Report it appears that the receipts from Canal and Railroad Tolls, and charges from motive power were—

For the year 1843,	$1,017,811 12
For the year 1844,	1,167,603 42
For the year 1845,	1,106,979 43
For the year 1846,	1,295,491 76

Showing a gradual and steady increase, during the above period. Even last year, notwithstanding the delay in opening the navigation, they exceeded those of 1845, by the sum of $98,615 33. There is good reason, therefore, to believe, that if the public works shall continue to be conducted with the same degree of skill, industry, and integrity, with which they have been managed for some years past, the receipts from them will continue to increase, until the business upon them reaches their full capacity.

Some apprehensions have been expressed, that the construction of the great Central Railroad, between Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, may be the means of diminishing the income from the improvements of the State. In this I do not concur; on the contrary, I entertain the opinion, that the increased commerce, which it will invite between our great Eastern and Western emporiums, and the regions which connect with them, will not only add to the revenues of the Columbia railway, but will greatly increase the productiveness of all our public works. Such, I believe, has been the experience of New York; and such, I doubt not, will, in a very few years, be that of our own Commonwealth.

I transmit, herewith, a statement showing the actual receipts and expenditures for the last fiscal year; and also, an estimate of the same, for the present year, made with much care upon full consultation with the other officers of the government. From this estimate, it appears that the receipts of the year will exceed the expenditures, by the sum of $194,441 11.

The balance in the Treasury, on the 1st instant, was only $138,953 68. It is, therefore, altogether probable, that it may become necessary to make some arrangement to anticipate a small portion of the revenue for the year, to meet the interest which will fall due on the 1st of February next. I recommend that some legal provision be promptly made for this purpose. This will not affect the financial calculations and estimated results of the year. I feel entire confidence that, taking into view our operations of the whole year, the results will sustain substantially the estimates that have been presented.

The sum of two hundred thousand dollars, which is now annually appropriated to the cancellation of the relief issues, and which is included in the estimates, is discharging that amount of the public debt yearly, and is, in fact, an existing sinking fund.

If, therefore, the conclusion at which I have arrived, shall prove correct, that the taxes assessed under existing laws, on real and personal property, with the ordinary revenues, and an amount from the public improvements, equal to that received during the past year, will prove sufficient to pay the interest on the public debt, and other demands upon the Treasury, the annual increase of tolls upon the public works may be added to the present sinking fund of two hundred thousand dollars a year. From the experience of the three last preceding years, this increase may be fairly estimated, for some years to come, at one hundred thousand dollars per annum, and if it be added annually to the existing fund for the cancellation of the relief issues, they will all be taken out of circulation in about three years, at which time the State will have a sinking fund of half a million of dollars, to commence the liquidation of her funded debt. The application of this fund annually, with its accruing interest, to the purchase of five per cent. State stock at par, will, at the end of ten years, discharge $6,288,020 of the public debt, and, at the end of twenty years, $10,532,881, which will reduce the debt, including the cancellation of relief issues, at the end of twenty-three years from this time, to the sum of $23,175,032. The net income from the public works will then, it may be fairly presumed, be more than ample to pay the interest on the State debt, and the people may be entirely relieved from all taxation, for the payment of interest. In fact, there is reason to believe, that the increased wealth of the State, and the accumulation of business on the public works, will at a much earlier period admit of important reductions in the taxes, without retarding the consumption of the foregoing plan for reducing the debt. Notwithstanding the foregoing plan to be disposed to view these suggestions as visionary, I have the most entire confidence in their practicability, provided the public works shall continue to be managed with integrity and skill, the tax laws fairly executed, and the government, in all its departments, faithfully and honestly administered.

In connexion with this subject, I respectfully recommend to the General Assembly, the propriety and policy of proposing to the people an amendment to the constitution of the State, under the form of the tenth article of that instrument, by which the income from the public improvements, after deducting the necessary expenses for repairs and superintendence—the revenue arising from the State tax, on real and personal property, for a certain period, and such other items of income as may be deemed expedient to include, shall be set apart and be sacredly pledged for the payment of the interest upon the public debt, and the gradual liquidation of the principal.

Such an amendment, judiciously arranged, would, I apprehend, meet with the decided approbation of the people of the Commonwealth. It would concentrate public opinion upon a fixed object—remove all doubt of the fulness of the public credit, and lay the foundation for the final extinguishment of the public debt. It would give an additional security and assurance to the people, and to the public creditors, that, in no event could the public revenue be diverted from its legitimate object, and would furnish conclusive reasons for the prompt and cheerful payment of the taxes.

I would respectfully recommend a careful examination of the operations of existing tax laws. Taxes, however correctly they may be arranged by law, fall to a certain extent unequally upon the people, in consequence of their various circumstances and liabilities; but if to this unavoidable result be added careless and irregular assessments, by which large amounts of property escape taxation, great injustice is done to those who make an honest and full return of their taxable property.

The adjustment by Congress of the rates of duty on imports, is a topic that continues to divide public sentiment. In my message of the 7th of January last, I took occasion to express the views which I then entertained regarding it, and to these views I continue to adhere. I can entertain no doubt of the constitutional power of the federal government to make such discriminations in the rates of duties on imports, as may afford reasonable encouragement to domestic manufactures and productions which may be injuriously affected by foreign competition. This is a power incident to every sovereign State, and as the separate states of this Union are by the express terms of the constitution prohibited from its exercise, it follows that, unless it resides in the federal government, the United States are without this essential attribute of National sovereignty.

The extent of these discriminations, bearing, as they do, upon conflicting interests, and in some degree arraying those of one portion of the Union against another, can only be adjusted under the influence of that spirit of concession and compromise which prevailed in the adoption of the Constitution itself. The history of our legislation on this subject, demonstrates most conclusively, that a tariff, to be permanent, which is so essential to the manufacturing, as well as all the other great interests of the country, must be reasonable and equitable, and that all attempts to establish a rate of ultra protective, or low horizontal duties, have only tended to keep the question in a state of constant agitation, than which nothing can be more prejudicial to the interests of the business community. I am, therefore, in favor of such just discriminating duties us may be sufficient to sustain all our great national interests against injurious competition from abroad; such as will give to the home manufacturer, and producer, reasonable profits on his capital, and enable him to pay his workmen fair wages, without unnecessarily taxing the consumer.

Pennsylvania, possessing as she does such vast agricultural, manufacturing and mineral resources, and commercial advantages, has a peculiar interest in the adjustment of this question upon a permanent basis. Should the changes made in the rate of duties, by the tariff act of 1846, affect injuriously any of the great interests of the country, we must unite our efforts to induce Congress, to whose care and discretion the subject is committed by the constitution, and on whose wisdom and justice we may safely rely, to make all just and reasonable amendments.

From all the reflection I have been able to give this vexed and complicated subject, I am thoroughly convinced, that reasonable discriminating duties, such as can be permanently maintained, in connection with the operations of the Constitutional Treasury and a sound currency, will do more to promote the permanent and general prosperity of all the great interests of the country, than any system of policy which can be adopted. High duties, with the employment of banks as the depositories of the public moneys, and a consequent inflation of paper currency, by which the advantage of the duty to the home manufacturer and producer is destroyed, are as certain to hasten and aggravate those commercial revulsions, to which all nations are exposed, as profligacy and vice are to produce want and misery.

The repeal or modification of the British Corn Laws, by which our agricultural products are admitted into British ports, while it was a measure dictated alike by sound policy, and humanity, toward the suffering population of the United Kingdom, has had a most happy influence upon our farming interests. This measure has already augmented the demand for our bread-stuffs, at enhanced prices, and there is reason to believe it will continue to increase permanently our agricultural exports, which cannot fail to add to the general wealth and prosperity of the State and Nation.

In the last annual message I expressed my views at length, in regard to the policy of the banking system, to which I respectfully refer. To the opinions therein contained, I continue to adhere. At present there is reason to believe that our banks are in a comparatively sound condition. Without ascribing this creditable and healthy state of things entirely to the policy which has been adopted, of limiting the amount of banking capital, and making bankers individually liable for the payment of their debts, I am persuaded that it has a salutary influence in preserving the soundness of the currency, and that it should be adhered to inflexibly.

I refer you, with great pleasure, to the able report of the Canal Commissioners, for a detailed statement of the operations upon the public improvements during the past year.

The economy, skill and integrity, with which they have been managed for a few years past, have greatly tended to restore public confidence, and re-establish the credit of the State, and justly entitles every member of the respective Boards of Canal Commissioners, who has had an agency in producing this great reformation, to the gratitude and confidence of the whole community. I refer to the fact, with no ordinary satisfaction, that during the last three years there has not occurred, among all the officers and agents employed on the several lines of improvements, a single case of defalcation.

The improvement of the Ohio river, from its mouth to the city of Pittsburgh, has heretofore been deemed an object of sufficient national importance to claim the attention of the federal government. Numerous appropriations have been made for this purpose, but not sufficient to carry out any efficient and useful system. Many of the Western and South-Western States of the Union are interested in this improvement. The connection, however, of the main line of our canals and railroads, at the city of Pittsburgh, renders its improvement an object of the greatest interest to this State. If it were made navigable during all seasons of the year (except when ice-bound) for steamboats of a large class, it would add to the commerce of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh, and to the carrying trade upon the public works, an amount of business that cannot be readily estimated. I therefore suggest to the members of the General Assembly, the propriety of memorializing Congress on this subject, and pressing it upon the attention of the general government, unincumbered with any minor projects, as one worthy its special consideration and favor.

I refer with much satisfaction, to the reports of the Auditor General and State Treasurer. They exhibit in detail the condition of the finances of the State, and shew the laudable industry and intelligent care which these officers have employed in the discharge of their important and laborious duties.

Before the passage of the act of Assembly of last session, which transferred to the county in which the crime may have been committed, payment of expenses for arresting fugitives from justice, the State had become liable to various agents, duly authorized, to an inconsiderable amount. This liability could not be met, because no appropriation was made for that purpose. The individuals interested in this matter are justly entitled to remuneration, and I respectfully recommend that an appropriation be made to liquidate their claims. The amount will be laid before you by the Auditor General.

In consequence of the engagements of the Adjutant General in the organization of the volunteers for the service of the United States in the war with Mexico, his annual report upon our military affairs has not yet been received: as soon as it comes to hand it will be transmitted to the General Assembly.

The Act of the 29th of March, 1836, provided for the appointment and compensation of a State Geologist and his assistant, and a competent practical, analytical, and experimental chemist, for the purpose of making an accurate geological and mineralogical survey of the State, with a view to determine the order, succession, arrangement, relative position, and the dip or inclination, and the comparative magnitude of the several geological formations within the State, and to discover and examine all deposites of ores, coals, clays, marbles and such other mineral substances as may be deemed useful or valuable. The State Geologist was required to make annual reports of the progress of the survey—to cause to be represented on the map of the Commonwealth, by colors and other appropriate means, the various areas occupied by the different geological formations in the State, and to mark thereon the localities of the respective deposites of the various mineral substances discovered. It is made the duty of the chemist to make full and complete examinations, assays and analyses of all such rocks, ores, soils, mineral substances and mineral waters, as may be submitted to him by the geologist, and to furnish him with a detailed and competent account of the results so obtained. It was also made the duty, among other things, of the State Geologist, upon the completion of the survey, to compile a memoir of the geology and mineralogy of the State, comprising a complete account of the leading subjects and discoveries embraced in the survey.

In pursuance of this act, a State Geologist and his assistant, &c., were appointed, who proceeded with the work, and the State expended upon it the sum of $76,657 87. A number of annual reports were made, as provided by law; but the main object of the Legislature, the publication of a complete memoir of the survey, exhibiting the results of the examination, and embodying for the use of the public the vast sum of information, for which so large an amount of public money was expended, has not yet been accomplished. It appears to me that this subject is of sufficient importance to secure Legislative consideration.

Frequent complaints have for years been made by the people, of these discriminations in the Legislature by the passage of private and local bills, which greatly increases the business and create subjects for repeal and amendment. Many laws are thus enacted which appear to be regarded as of little consequence or value, for of the acts of the last session, forty-three remain in the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth, which have not been enrolled nor printed, because of the small amount of tax to which they are subject by the act of the 16th of April, 1845, has not been paid into the State Treasury. Thus, after the time in preparing and passing these bills has been consumed, and the cost of printing and transcribing them has been incurred, they are suffered to remain in idle office, useless and neglected. This proves that much private legislation could be profitably dispensed with, and the time it occupies devoted to subjects of general legislation, by which the duration of the sessions would be shortened, and the expenses of the government greatly diminished.

The progressive increase of the number of divorces granted by the Legislature, forces this subject upon the consideration of the General Assembly. It appears to be the settled policy of this State, to provide by law for the dissolution of the marriage contract, for other causes than adultery. These causes are enumerated in the Act of the 13th of March, 1815. They embrace a wide range, and seem to provide for all the grievances that may arise in this interesting relation, which may require legal interposition.

Special acts of the Legislature for disturbing the contract between husband and wife, are calculated to arrest the attention of every good citizen, when it is remembered that the disregard of marriage vows, and facilities for releasing parties from their obligation, are justly regarded as strong indications of degeneracy in public virtue and public morals; and that a high regard of marital rights, and a sacred observance of marriage contracts, are among the strongest proofs of the progress of civilization, and of the influence of true religion.

The preamble of the act of 1815, commends itself to our approval by the wisdom and aptness for which it is distinguished. The Legislature there say, "Whereas, the divine precept of the Christian religion—the promotion of the best interests of human happiness, the design of marriage, and the object of parties entering into the marriage state, require that it should continue during their joint lives."

These salutary truths, so well expressed, present, in imposing terms, the duty of extreme caution in interfering with the sanctity of the marriage contract.

It may be true that cases occasionally arise of such extreme hardship, as to warrant the passage of special acts of divorce; but such as require legislative interposition can but seldom occur, unless the wide range of the act of 1815 is extended beyond reasonable limits.

The signing of bills for dissolving the bonds of matrimony has always been to me a perplexing duty. I have hitherto given my assent to them, confiding in the judgment and discretion of the representatives of the people, to whom, and not to the Executive, the facts of each case are submitted. But upon a review of the special divorces granted since the enactment of the act of 1815, it appears that there has been an alarming increase of them, which should, in my opinion, be arrested. During the first period of ten years after the passage of the said act, laws were passed for divorcing the parties to *sixteen* marriage contracts; during the next ten years, *forty-two*, and during the last ten years, *ninety* were passed.

I know of no change in the habits, manners, or condition of the citizens of the State, in their social relations, or in the increase of their number, that accounts for, or warrants this increase of divorces. It is possible that the cause of it may in a degree be found in the facility of obtaining legislation on the subject. Without further inquiry into the cause, the effect is, in my judgement, injurious to the public welfare, and should be strictly guarded against in future.

Whatever doubts may have been, or are now entertained, of the power of the Legislature to pass divorce laws, for any other cause than adultery, or to pass them under the provisions of the Constitution of the United States, that no State shall pass any law impairing the obligation of contracts, it seems to be conceded, against the opinions of many wise and good men, that the power may be constitutionally exercised; but in view of these opinions, the extreme delicacy and responsibility of granting these applications, appear in a strong light.

Under the marriage contract, important and valuable rights are vested in the parties, and heavy responsibilities are assumed which should not be disturbed, even when the power to interfere is unquestionable, without legal notice to the party who is to be affected by the proceeding, and a fair and open trial, the right to which cannot be doubted, and can only be secured by referring the parties to the judicial tribunals.

In every view I can take of this interesting subject, I am persuaded that these special legislative divorces have a dangerous tendency, and that if the power to grant them is exercised at all, a proper regard for the public welfare requires that it should be limited to cases of extreme hardship and unquestionable propriety.

The progress of our age in civilization has been distinguished in Pennsylvania, by the amelioration of the penal code, and her improved prison discipline. The organization of her penitentiaries, their domestic economy, and the care and attention to the support, cleanliness, industry, and moral instruction of their inmates, have secured the general approbation and confidence of our own citizens, and have excited the admiration of other States and nations, and furnished models for their imitation. The Philadelphia society for alleviating the miseries of the public prisons, has exercised an efficient agency in producing these valuable results. In order that all the benefits of experience may be had and improved, they submit the propriety of making provisions by law for obtaining, annually, accurate information relative to the convictions for crime, the character of the criminals, the condition and expenses of the penitentiaries and prisons of the Commonwealth, and the costs of supporting the convicts.

The motives of this society are so disinterested, and the reasons they assign for collecting the information required, are so conclusive, and so ably represented in a communication which I have received from them, that I take great pleasure in transmitting copies of it herewith, in order that the philanthropic views of the society, and the importance of the subject, may receive that early attention of the Great Assembly which they so richly merit.

The government of Pennsylvania, and her literary, charitable and benevolent institutions, are among the first and best. The people are industrious, intelligent and enterprising. In time of peace, quiet and unobtrusive—in war, firm and decided. Blessed in her physical resources and her institutions, and animated by the spirit of her holy religion, her onward course in improving her social condition is rapid. The great element of preserving, enlarging and perpetuating her greatness, is the universal education of her youth. In this, too, she has for a number of years advanced with the vigor by which all her great efforts are distinguished. The able report of the Superintendent presents the steady and uniform progress of the sytem of common school instruction. That it is yet imperfect, and to some extent inefficient, may be freely admitted; but, who can doubt that the wisdom and energy which commenced, will mature and perfect it.

In conclusion, gentlemen, accept assurances of my hearty co-operation with you in all measures for advancing the welfare of our citizens, and maintaining the honor and dignity of our beloved Commonwealth.

FRS. R. SHUNK.

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER,
Harrisburg, January 6, 1847.

The Morning Post.

L. HARPER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

PITTSBURGH:
MONDAY MORNING, JANUARY 11, 1846.

DEMOCRATIC NOMINATIONS.

FOR MAYOR,
ANDREW McILWAINE.

FOR MAYOR OF ALLEGHENY CITY.
CHARLES P. WHISTON.

Governor's Message.

To day we present the Governor's Message in full. By comparing the figures in the "official" with those of the abstract received by Magnetic Telegraph, we discover that they were correct.

The Governor's remarks in relation to the Volunteers will be found interesting. We are much pleased that he recommends to the Legislature that they should refund to the Volunteers of the two Pennsylvania Regiments their expenses from their respective homes to this city. The Legislature should act promptly in this matter. The propriety and justice of the measure cannot be doubted. The condition of the Finances of the State is favourable. The prospects of the State in a pecuniary view are encouraging.

The Governor is sanguine that the construction of the Central Railroad will greatly increase the productiveness of all our Public Works, by augmenting the commerce of the State.

The recommendation of an amendment to the Constitution, in the shape of a tenth article, which will insure the extinction of the State debt, will meet a hearty approval. We commend this matter to the attention of the Legislature and the people.

We cannot say that we altogether admire the position taken in the Message on the Tariff question. But we have no time to discuss the matter now. We ask attention to what Gov. Shunk says on the subject.

The Banks are represented to be in a comparatively sound condition.

The question of improving the Ohio river meets with favor, and the Message urges the Legislature to memorialize Congress on the subject.

Many other topics are taken up and discussed in the Message of the Governor, some of which we shall notice at length hereafter. Upon the whole we consider it a highly creditable State paper, and worthy the Executive of our great Commonwealth.

Mayoralty.

Turn out *Democrats* and WORKING MEN to the Meeting this evening at the OLD COURT HOUSE. Speeches will be delivered by the following gentlemen: Messrs Burke, Layng, Magraw, Breckenridge, McCandless, Shannon, Shaler, and others. *Turn out.*

$5 Reward.

☞ I will pay the above reward to any person who will give me information which will lead to the detection and conviction of the scoundrel or scoundrels who are in the habit of stealing the *Daily Post* each morning from the doors of the subscribers. L. HARPER.

Mexico.

The news received last evening by Telegraph, is important. Probably our next advices will bring advices of a great battle between the forces under Gen. Taylor and Santa Anna's army. It will be seen that they were within four days of a meeting. We cannot speculate as to the result.

The decided and bold stand taken by the Mexican Congress indicates that they have means that will enable them to continue the war. It is evident that they have hopes,—if indeed they are not sanguine—of conquering our forces and driving them from their soil.

In a few days we shall know more and be able to speak with more confidence as to the probable result of the existing war.

DEPARTURE OF THE VOLUNTEERS.

The four remaining companies left on Saturday, with the Field officers and Staff. An immense concourse of people assembled at the wharf to take leave of their friends and acquaintances.

Several accidents occurred—none, however, of a serious nature. Some of the officers and privates fell overboard in the confusion, but were secured un-drowned, "but very wet."

Some indiscreet members of the Irish Greens were the cause of much trouble and their conduct gave rise to a great deal of hard talk. About eight of the jolly members of this company, happening to stay away from the barracks in the morning, "took a little too much," in consequence of which they were found missing when the hour for embarkation arrived. The steamer Cambria shoved off and anchored in the middle of the river while the officers were sent off in search of those whom they suspected of having deserted. They were all found, somewhat sobered, and taken on the boat, which left finally at about 11 o'clock on Saturday evening.

—We have heard it said, and we believe there is much truth in the statement, that a certain class of persons in this city have for some time past been assiduous in their endeavors to prevent the Greens from being admitted in their first place; and next they resorted to tricks to induce the men to desert and thus bring disgrace upon the company and upon the Irish generally. We heard of one man who was offered six months boarding free of charge, and another $20, if they would desert.—We know that those who were absent on Saturday were not deserters, but had been made drunk and put away for concealment, by persons who felt an interest in the failure of the company. We are not sure that all the missing were treated in this way, but some of them were certainly, for so they confessed.

To the credit of the Irish Greens, we will make one statement, and let us see if the same can be said of any other company. There are several men, Irishmen, in that company, who have left families and business, and gone to Mexico, who had no other motive than to secure the acceptance of their company, and to relieve themselves and our city from the lasting disgrace of a failure to furnish a representation in the second Regiment.

THEATRE.

Mr. Foster's Benefit.—This evening, Mr. Foster, Stage Manager, takes his benefit. We ask attention to his bill; it is rich, and the entertainments, we do not hesitate to say, will amply repay the price of the tickets.

Mr. F. is one of our most popular actors. He is good in all the parts he undertakes. The audience is always delighted when he appears. In addition to the attractiveness of the bill, and his merits as an actor, he has claims as a citizen which should guarantee him a good support. Mr. Foster, we are informed, is a perfect gentleman in private life; a man against whom nothing is urged that society denounces as disreputable.

We are anxious to see the Theatre well filled to-night.

Mr. Mestayer's Benefit.—To-morrow evening is set apart for the Benefit of Mr. Mestayer. To the lovers of fun, the "bill of fare" which he has placed before us, will be sufficient to attract a large crowd. We are quite confident that he will succeed, for he deserves a bumper. We speak the prevailing opinion when we say of this gentleman, that he is, in his line of characters, superior to any that has appeared in our city for years. He has become a favorite with all the frequenters of the Theatre.—He has claims upon their liberality, and we are anxious that they may not forget him to-morrow evening.

Miss Lewis.—Cannot little Bertha have a Benefit? We ask for the house one-night for her. She is many evenings the centre of attraction at the Theatre, and we have no doubt our people will feel disposed to patronize her.

HUGHES CASE.

The Jury in this case rendered their verdict on Saturday morning—NOT GUILTY.

This case has excited much interest in the city, during the progress of the trial. The Court room was crowded daily with an eager multitude.

☞ We have good authority for stating that the Telegraph is mistaken in charging Rev. *Barnes*, of the Philadelphia Rangers with having deserted. Adjutant General Bowman informs us that the Rev. gentleman went aboard a few minutes previous to the departure of the boat. We hope there may be no mistake in this latter statement.

Committed—Jacob Needs, noticed on Saturday as having been arrested on suspicion of having robbed Mrs. Anderson, was committed for a further hearing. His wife was discharged. Sufficient evidence has not yet been adduced to warrant the Mayor in sending up for a trial in the Quarter Sessions.

Whig Primary Meetings.—So far as we have heard, the whig meetings on Saturday evening resulted in the selection of Delegates favorable to Hon. Walter Forward for Governor. In some of the Wards there was no show of opposition.

Regulars.—On Friday morning fifty-three soldiers of the Regular Army, from New York, shipped on the Clipper No. 2, for the South. Another squad passed our city for the same destination on Saturday.

Capt. Hay.—It is the general opinion that this gentleman has got himself into some difficulty, but we have received no reliable information on the subject.

Gone.—Capt. ASHBRIDGE left our city for New Orleans on Friday. He is a noble old fellow, and we wish him happiness wherever he may be. We hope to hear from him often.

☞ Don't forget the meeting of the friends of ANDREW M'ILWAINE, at the Old Court House this evening. Any number of speeches may be expected.

Not a Tinker.—The name of the gentleman appointed Drum Major, by Col. Roberts, is J. L. Tinkcom, and not J. L. Tinker.

☞ We have had no confirmation of the death of Mr. Addams, tragedian, by drowning.

☞ Dr. KANE left our city for his home, Philadelphia, yesterday.

☞ The Governor's Message has crowded out our usual variety. The address of Baggs on the occasion of the Musket Presentation to Woolly is deferred. The Presentation of a Pack of Cards, which elicited two soul stirring addresses from members of the Cambria Guards, can not appear to-day.

The "Presentations" on Saturday were innumerable—muskets, cards, tin-cups and patty pans were delivered to the soldiers with the most imposing ceremonies.

☞ Adjutant General BOWMAN left our city yesterday for his home, Bedford, after a residence of several weeks in our city. During his stay here, he has made many friends by his mild and gentlemanly deportment, and the energy with which he discharged the important duties of his office.

We take pleasure in publishing the annexed testimonial from the officers of the second Regiment:

PITTSBURGH, January 8th, 1847.

To Gen. George W. Bowman, Adjutant General of Pennsylvania:

SIR—The undersigned, Field and Company Officers of the Second Regiment Pennsylvania Volunteers, about to embark for the seat of war in Mexico, take great pleasure in expressing their approbation to you for the faithful, efficient and impartial manner in which you have discharged your duties as Adjutant General of the State. We feel deeply sensible of our obligations to you for the courtesy and kindness which have characterized your conduct as a public officer, and take leave of you with the most lively wishes for your prosperity and welfare.

Very respectfully, your friends,

WM. B. ROBERTS, Colonel.
JOHN W. GEARY, Lieut. Col.
WM. BAIRDLE, Major.
John S. Wilson, Captain Columbia Guards.
Thomas S. Loeser, Captain Reading Artillerists.
John Humphreys, Capt. American Highlanders.
Chas.