

THE COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT.

I have sworn upon the Altar of God, eternal hostility to every form of Tyranny over the Mind of Man.—Thomas Jefferson

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TERMS:

The COLUMBIA DEMOCRAT will be published every Saturday morning, at TWO DOLLARS per annum payable half yearly in advance, or Two Dollars Fifty Cents, if not paid within the year. No subscription will be taken for a shorter period than six months; nor any discontinuance permitted, until all arrearages are discharged.

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MESSAGE.

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

FELLOW CITIZENS:—Having, in my former messages, entered very fully into the financial condition and other general interests of the state, I deem it unnecessary to repeat the views then submitted to the Legislature, but simply to refer to them, and say that they remain in all respects substantially the same as heretofore expressed. I shall proceed at once to call your attention to those matters of public policy, which seem to require, in the greatest degree, the attention of the Legislature. In common with every state in the union, and with all parts of the commercial world, the citizens of Pennsylvania are now undergoing the severe ordeal of pecuniary embarrassment. Business of all kinds is crippled and paralyzed; private and public enterprise has been arrested; the timid alarmed, and even the boldest staggered at impending evils. But it is some consolation for us to reflect, that these difficulties are the bitter fruits, so far as Pennsylvania is concerned, of the rash and unpolitic legislation of a single year, and that none of the responsibility rests upon us.

For upwards of ten years Pennsylvania had been gradually improving her condition and enjoying all the advantages that can arise from a substantial currency, and the entire confidence of all parts of the world. At an unfortunate period, the banking capital, which had been, during the flourishing season, about twenty millions of dollars, was increased to near sixty; and, as one of the most fatal consequences, many unwise and impolitic public improvements undertaken,—corporations created for purposes far beyond their means to accomplish,—individuals contracted responsibilities and entered into speculations, which they were totally unable to bring to a successful close; and finally to render the catastrophe more destructive, the explosion of this enormous bank bubble has crushed all these enterprises, public and private, and left in every quarter of the state some monument of blasted hope and public folly. It will require a little time to recover from the panic, and to estimate, with precision, the extent of the mischief. It will probably be found far less than has been generally supposed. The vigor and industry of the community, sustained as they are by our immense natural resources, will soon overcome this temporary repulse, and go on, as if it had never happened. Some will be unfortunately ruined, but the great mass of the community will in the end be little affected. The portion of the community engaged in agricultural pursuits is comparatively free from debt and embarrassment, and possessed of all the benefits that arise from favorable seasons and plentiful harvests.

I can myself see no just ground for that despondency which seems to pervade, so generally, the minds of the people. The injury to our credit abroad, although productive of much temporary inconvenience, will ultimately be serviceable to the community. It will teach us to rely on ourselves, to turn our attention to the development of our own resources; and to obtain that, by our own labor, which we have hitherto bought upon trust. Whatever may be the fears of that portion of our community, who are always predicting ruin, and bemoaning the effects of causes which they do not understand, time will soon prove, that the resources of Pennsylvania, her ability to meet all her engagements, and the respect of her citizens for the plighted faith of the state, have not been in the slightest degree shaken by any of the misfortunes under which we are now suffering. In nearly all instances, these fears will be found to have had their origin in the croakings of unprincipled demagogues, who are willing to undervalue her means, and the integrity of her citizens, if

they can thereby promote their own selfish ends. If there be any of our citizens, who honestly believe, that Pennsylvania will prove unable to perform all her engagements they will be found to be neither very deep reasoners, nor very accurately acquainted with the abundance and nature of her resources. If there be any of her citizens, who think that she will prove faithless and unwilling to discharge her obligations, we may safely say, they know little of her true character, and meet with no encouragement or favor, from any considerable portion of the community. To do what she agrees to do, and to pay what she promises to pay, are two of her distinguishing characteristics; and he who would seek to induce her to forfeit either of them, will find, that he gains neither the confidence, nor respect, of her citizens by the attempt. She may be temporarily obliged to postpone the discharge of her engagements until a more convenient season; but to deny the obligation itself, or to refuse to comply with it, would be a reproach upon her integrity, which no public man dare advise or sanction.

However great her public debt may seem to be, a tax of a few cents per ton upon her coal & iron, which are scattered in every hill and valley throughout her borders, will, in some future day not only pay the interest on her public debt, but the principal also, probably within the lifetime of many of those who are now upon the stage of publication. This tax would be paid in a great measure by the consumers of these products in other states, and would be scarcely felt by her own citizens. Cut off as this country now is, and must continue to be, from the European supply of coal and iron, of which it has hitherto chiefly depended, the day is not far distant, when Pennsylvania will supply more than three-fourths of the other states of this union with coal, and a majority of them with iron. This is a position from which no legislation and no human power can remove her. Her geographical position, and the favorable relative locations of her coal and iron deposits, put Pennsylvania beyond the reach of all rivalry from any quarter. She seems to have been destined, by nature, to be the great workshop of the American Union; and, if her citizens and her legislature are true to themselves, and will avoid catering to the views and interests of other sections, regardless of her own, her public debt will hereafter occasion but little inconvenience; and they will have no cause to regret the construction of her public improvements, which have contributed to the development of these advantages. This is not the language of sanguine hope, or blind confidence, but of clear sighted practical experience, of the truth of which every unprejudiced man must be convinced, who will carefully investigate the facts relating to her condition.

At the close of the last war, the pecuniary embarrassment and distress pervading our country, were far greater than they are now. We had just emerged from a protracted, expensive, and harassing war. The national debt was nearly one hundred and thirty millions of dollars; business of all kinds was broken up; confidence was entirely destroyed; all classes of the community were in debt; our banks broken and worthless; public feeling weakened and shaken to a degree infinitely beyond what is now known; and, worse than all this, ranking political animosities against the then administration of the general government had created or raised up, a powerful, unscrupulous, and violent party, under the plausible name of the 'Peace Party,' which threw in the way of the administration every possible obstacle, in the triumphant prosecution of that war, or the correction of the evils which it inevitably entailed upon the country. But, notwithstanding all these formidable discouragements, the good sense, the enterprise and the patriotism of the people, seconded those then entrusted with the administration of the government, who performed their duty with Roman firmness and integrity. Taxes were recommended, levied, and paid, to sustain the credit and honor of the government—confidence was restored, business resumed its accustomed channels, and one of the most flourishing seasons in the history of our country succeeded. That enormous debt was, in the process of time, entirely extinguished.—Those who recommended the necessary measures to the attainment of this great end have been rewarded with respect and gratitude. The same honest and fearless discharge of duty, will be attended with the same results now. Our history has never yet recorded a single instance, in which a public man, who stood by the honor of his country in critical emergencies, was not fully sustained in his efforts by his fellow citizens. He may be traduced and vilified by a manly and faithful discharge of duty outlives the efforts of his traducers. The proudest monument that a public man can desire to leave his children; is one inscribed

—he knew his duty—he dared perform it—he never flinched from his post.

The whole amount of the present funded debt of the state, exclusive of the deposits of the surplus revenue, is \$37,937,788 24. This debt is reimbursable as follows:

Balance of Loan per act of 14th April, 1838,	\$15,000 00
In the year 1841,	56,022 60
1844,	62,500 00
1845,	4,104,242 08
1847,	72,235 06
1850,	1,000,000 00
1853,	2,000,000 00
1855,	3,000,000 00
1856,	2,738,164 83
1858,	7,070,661 44
1859,	1,250,000 00
1860,	3,648,880 00
1861,	129,000 00
1862,	2,375,400 00
1862,	200,900 00
1864,	2,515,000 00
1865,	2,756,510 00
1868,	2,523,000 00
1870,	1,957,462 15
At the expiration of certain Pa. k. charters,	575,737 50
Interest due 1st August, last, for which certificates have been issued, redeemable in August, 1843,	871,075 63
	\$37,937,788 24

This debt has been contracted for the following purposes, viz:

For Canals and Railways,	\$30,533,629 15
Pay Interest on public debt,	4,410,136 03
For the use of the Treasury,	1,521,689 00
Turnpike, state roads &c.	930,000 00
Union Canal,	200,000 00
Eastern Penitentiary,	120,000 00
Franklin Rail Road,	100,000 00
Pennsylvania & Ohio Canal,	50,000 00
Insane Asylum,	22,332 06
	\$37,937,788 24

The value of our Public Improvements estimated at cost is \$30,533,629 15. The state owns Bank Stock which costs at par \$1,108,700 00. Turnpike and Bridge Stock 2,836,262 45. Canal and Navigation stock 844,778 66. Railroad stock 365,276 00. Money due on patented lands estimated at 1,000,000 000.

The foregoing does not include the amount due to Domestic Creditors, entered on the books of the Auditor General, per resolution of 7th April 1842.

These internal improvements, for the construction of which the principal amount of the State debt has been incurred, consist of 793 1/2 miles of canals and railways completed, and 140 1/2 miles of canals in progress of construction and nearly completed. The finished works are the following:

The Delaware canal, from Easton to tide at Bristol,	59 1/2
The main line of canal and railway from Philadelphia to Pitsburg,	305 1/2
Canal from Beaver on the Ohio river to the mouth of the French creek feeder, in the direction of Erie,	97 1/2
Canal from Franklin on the Allegheny river to Corneaux lake,	49 1/2
Canal, Susquehanna and North Branch from Duncan's Island to Lackawanna,	111 1/2
Canal, West Branch from Northumberland to Farrandsvill,	73
Several side cuts and navigable feeders,	7
Total Canals and railway completed,	703 1/2

Canals in progress and nearly completed,	Miles.
North Branch extension, from Lackawanna to New York line,	90
Erie extension from the mouth of the French Creek Feeder to Erie harbor,	38 1/2
Wisconsin canal from Duncan's Island Wisconsin creek,	12 1/2
Total canals in progress,	140 1/2

The State has always met the payment of the interest upon the public debt with punctuality, until the semi-annual payment due on the 1st of August last; when for want of adequate provision for that purpose, certificates of the amount due to each holder of the stock were issued, bearing an interest of six per cent, payable in one year, agreeably to the Act passed the 27th day of July last. It now becomes the imperative duty of the Legislature to make provision, as well for its payment, as for the payment of the interest falling due

on the first of February and August next.

Until some mode of raising the amount necessary for the payment of this interest, less burthensome to the people, is devised, the taxes imposed by existing laws seem to be indispensable. It may be worthy the consideration of the Legislature, however, whether the present defective system of making assessments, and reaching the objects of taxation, does not require revision. It is believed, if such revision be judiciously made, that no increase of the taxes now authorized would be necessary, to produce an adequate amount from that source, to cover the pressing demand made upon the Treasury.

You will observe by a report accompanying this message, that in pursuance of the Act of Assembly, passed for that purpose on the 27th day of July last, proposals were invited for the sale of the public improvements of the Commonwealth. No bid for the same, that can possibly be accepted, was received. This measure was suggested in my last annual message, believing that, in our present embarrassed condition, it was an experiment, which might be productive of relief, worth trying. It has been tried, and has utterly failed. The truth is, the amount of money necessary for the purchase of any considerable portion of our improvements, is far greater than any citizens of our country are able to raise for that purpose. Were they to be sold at all, they would necessarily, either directly or indirectly, fall into the hands of foreign capitalists. The people must, in a great measure, lose the control over their management, and they would necessarily become private monopolies. This would seem to be a measure, as dangerous to the public interest, as it would be humiliating to the public pride.

The revenues upon our public works have not diminished in any proportion to the extent of the embarrassments which have been thrown in the way of trade. It will be seen by referring to the Report of the Canal Commissioners, which will shortly be laid before you, notwithstanding the scarcity and depreciation of money, the impaired condition of credit, and the enormous rates of exchange, the receipts from tolls for the fiscal year, ending the 30th November, 1842, amount to \$920,499 42. The expenditures, for all purpose, for the nine months commencing on the 1st March and ending 30th November, 1742, amount to 390,049 70.

Leaving an excess of receipts for the year, over the expenses of nine months 530,452 72 notwithstanding the decrease in tolls has been \$159,326 61.

The receipts and expenditures on the main lines have been as follows:

Tolls received in 1842,	All expenses and liabilities for 9 months,	
Columbia Railroad,	\$357,401 50	\$132,599 45
Eastern & Juniata Divisions,	195,980 16	45,072 12
Allegheny Portage Rail-road,	124,258 40	96,528 63
Western Division,	85,449 42	28,080 00
	\$702,949 48	\$300,180 20

Leaving an excess of tolls over expenditures of \$462,769 28, on the above usually denominated the main line from Philadelphia to Pitsburg.

On the Delaware Divisions and other branches of the Canals, the excess of tolls over expenditures, during the same period, has been \$67,683 44. It is worthy too of remark that the expenses for repairs alone for the nine months has been only \$164,526 30.

This exhibit cannot fail to inspire us with increased confidence in the ultimate value and usefulness of our public works, strengthened as it is by the fact, that there has been a falling-off in the canal tolls for New York for the fiscal year ending 30th November, of \$284,381 89.

It is proper here also in explanation to state one fact worthy of consideration. At the commencement of my administration there was a debt due for ordinary repairs previously done, independent of the debt due on the Beaver divisions, of \$310,574. For the repairs of the Huntingdon county breach 350,000. For repairs indispensable to opening and the successful prosecution of the navigation, &c. as per report of engineers especially de-

tailed for that service 1,676,901

Amounting to the sum of \$2,397,500. Which has been hanging, like an incubus, on the whole system, and has contributed much to embarrass its operations, and to paralyze the most laudable exertions of those entrusted with the conducting of them. In the progress of time, too, the greater portion of the perished materials, in the construction of our public works become so far decayed and dilapidated, as to require, in most instances a partial, and in many instances an entire renewal, during the first three years of my administration. Large amounts were necessarily expended in making these repairs, so large indeed, that public confidence was very considerably shaken in the usefulness and value of the system itself. Those who did not reflect on the circumstance to which I have just adverted, supposed this extraordinary outlay for repairs must be annually repeated. But the work being done, the expenses for that purpose for a number of years to come will be greatly diminished.

While speaking upon this subject, I may call an attention to a considerable item of expenditure, which may be, with justice, hereafter wholly cut off. A very considerable sum is annually paid for repairing and rebuilding the various bridges for public & private convenience, across the canal and railways. This burden has been heretofore sustained by the state, but considering the great increase in value of the private property, through which the improvements pass, and that a considerable portion of the people of the commonwealth derive no immediate benefit from the outlay for that purpose, it would seem to be but just and proper, that the rebuilding and repairing of the private bridges should hereafter be done by the owners of the property, and the public ones by the townships or counties, in which they are situated.

Since my last annual message, in which I took occasion to refer to the combinations of private companies and individuals, to monopolize and reap nearly all the advantages from the transportation on our internal improvements, there has been a trial and conviction of several persons, on the clearest proof, of a most flagrant conspiracy to render this monopolizing combination still more triumphant over the laws. This conviction will have the salutary tendency to arrest hereafter any such illegal attempts. It is now to be hoped, that by the removal of these obstacles in the way of fair individual competition, our public improvements will be open, as they were intended to be, to the free and equal enjoyment of all.

Several recommendations, or what were deemed essential reforms, in the management of our internal improvements, made either by the executive or canal commissioners, have been hitherto baffled and defeated, by combinations of interest, which it is not easy to comprehend. I do not deem it necessary to specify particularly all these suggestions, but will refer you to my last annual message, and the last and present report of the Canal Commissioners, in which they are contained. I trust that whatever may have been the doubt heretofore on the subject if any there was, the justice and propriety of making them are now beyond question. During the last year, as well as former years, the canal commissioners have been assiduously laboring to correct the most glaring of the errors and abuses which had crept into the management of our public improvements. They have done much, but much remains to be done, and unless seconded by the Legislature, there will much remain to be lamented, without the power to remove it.

Nothing has been done under the acts of Assembly passed at the last session for the incorporation of companies to complete the unfinished lines of our improvements. If any more effectual mode for the accomplishment of this object can be devised, it will afford me great pleasure to cooperate with you in carrying it into execution.

The resolution of the General Assembly of the 7th of April last, relative to the payment of interest to domestic creditors, provides that such of the creditors of the Commonwealth as do not choose to receive certificates of stock, shall be entitled to credit for the amount of their claim, on the books of the Auditor General and shall receive interest at six per cent on balances due for work done prior to the 4th of May, 1841, interest to be allowed from that date, and on balances due for work done since the 4th of May, 1841, interest to be allowed from the passage of the act. And the first section of the act of the 27th July last after making certain specific appropriations, directs whatever balance may be in the Treasury on the first days of August, November and February then next after paying current demands on the Treasury, to

(Concluded on fourth page.)