

# Columbia Democrat.

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

H. WEBB, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR.

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[Number

## Governor's Message.

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 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 are sly 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 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 except 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 cause to be enrolled and held in readiness, for muster into the service of the U. 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 16th 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 & mustered into the service of the

United States at Pittsburg, on the 15th day of December. Six of the companies composing the regiment, were organized in Philadelphia; one in Pottsville; one in Wilkesbarre, and two in Pittsburg.

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 Pittsburg, on the 5th instant. One of the companies composing this regiment was organized in Philadelphia; one in Reading; one in Mauch Chunk; one in Harrisburg; one in Danville; two in Cambria county; one in Westmoreland county; one in Fayette county; and one in Pittsburg.

The energy and the exalted patriotism which have thus been evinced by the citizen soldiers 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 admirably expressed, in which mingled the fulness of her patriotism, and the charms of her influence, cast a halo around the volunteer, when with lingering looks at the loved objects of home, he commenced his wintery march for the west of war, and gave him the assurance that the blessings of the soldiers' 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 mustered in 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 travelling 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 Pittsburg.

The sacrifices they have evinced, merits in my opinion, this small acknowledgment 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 this 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 Bowen, and his Assistant; Colonel Patricksen, 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 December last, as appears from the Report of the Auditor General:

Total funded debt,	\$38,958,970 52
Relief notes in circulation,	1,081,664 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 December, 1846, \$40,739,577 09. Being \$196,816 22, less than it was on the 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 \$663,851 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 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 simple 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 22 which deficit was supplied out of the balance in the Treasury on the 1st of December 1844 and by diminution of the outstanding taxes. Thus,

On the 1st December 1844, the balance in the Treasury was \$663,851 88

And on the 1st of December, 1845, it was 384,886 09

Showing a reduction of the balance in the Treasury of 278,965 79

On the 1st December 1844 the estimated amount of available outstanding taxes was \$1,000,778 03

And on the 1st December 1845, they were estimated at 874,544 36

Showing a diminution of the outstanding taxes of 126,233 67

And making an aggregate diminution of the balance in the Treasury, and outstanding taxes, during the year ending 30th November, 1845, of \$414,199 22

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 operations of the year, ending on the 30th of November, 1846, also exhibit a like deficiency, but less in amount. Thus,

The balance in the Treasury on the 1st December, 1845, was, \$384,886 09

And the estimated amount of available taxes outstanding at the same period, was 874,544 36

Making an aggregate amount of balance in the Treasury, and outstanding taxes on the 1st December 1845, of 1,259,430 45

The balance in the Treasury on the 1st December 1846 was \$384,679 70

And the estimated amount of available taxes outstanding at the same period was 542,688 64

Making an aggregate of the balance in the Treasury, and outstanding taxes on the 1st December 1846 of 927,367 34

Showing a diminution of the balance in the Treasury and outstanding taxes during the fiscal year ending on the 30th November 1846 of \$332,063 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 arrears 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 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 1846 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 it fairly made, will 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 1st 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 for motive power, were—

For the year 1843	\$1,017,841 12
For the year 1844	1,167,603 42
For the year 1845	1,196,979 48
For the year 1846	1,295,494 70

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 \$98,515 32. 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 Pittsburg, 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 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 \$438,986 68. It is therefore altogether probable that it may become necessary to make some arrangement to anticipate a small portion of the revenue of 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 the 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, \$16,532,881, 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 \$29,175,033. 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 consummation of the foregoing plan for reducing the debt. Notwithstanding some may 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, honestly & faithfully administered.

In connection 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 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 the 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 ratio