

STAR OF THE NORTH.

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One square, three months, 3 00
One year, 8 00

Choice Poetry.

TO PENNSYLVANIA.

Oh, State prayer founded! I never lung
Such choice upon a people's tongue,
Such power to bless or ban.
As that which makes thy whisper Fate,
For which on thee the centuries wait,
And destinies of man.

Across the Alleghenian chain,
With groanings from the homes of pain
The cool blast winds its way:
Wild wailings from Potomac's flood,
The crying of the children's blood
Is in thy ears to day.

And unto thee in Freedom's hour
Of sore need, God gives power
To ruin or to save.
To wound or heal, to blight or bless
With fruitful field or wilderness,
A free home or a grave;

Nay more: transcending time and place,
The question of the human race,
Is thine to solve anew:
And trembling doubtful on thy breath,
A thrill of life or pang of death
Shall reach the wide earth through.

Then let thy Virgins match thy crime,
Rise to the level of the time;
And, if son of thine
Betray or tempt thee, Brutus like,
For Fatherland and Freedom strike,
As Justice gives the sign.

Wake sleepers from thy dream of ease,
The great occasion's forelock seize,
And let the North wind strong
And golden leaves of Autumn be
The coronal of victory,
And thy triumphant song.

Gov. Curtin's Message.

READ JANUARY 17th, 1864.

The past year has afforded us a new cause of thankfulness to the Almighty for the moral and material blessings which he has bestowed upon us.

The balance in the Treasury, Nov. 30, 1863, was \$3,172,544 10

Receipts during the fiscal year ending Nov. 30, 1863, 4,259,451 65

Total in Treasury for fiscal year ending Nov. 30, 1863, 7,432,000 75

Payments for the same period have been 4,814,964 05

Balance in Treasury, Nov. 30, 1863, 2,617,036 70

The operations of the sinking fund during the year have shown by my proclamation of the 1st of September last, as follows:

Amount of Public Commonwealth bonds redeemed, 954,720 46

Follows, viz:

On loan Act, May 4, 1860, 600,000 00

On loan Act, May 4, 1860, 200,116 50

On loan Act, May 4, 1860, 100,000 00

On loan Act, May 4, 1860, 943 00

On loan Act, May 4, 1860, 13 00

On loan Act, May 4, 1860, 27 00

Total, 954,720 46

Of public debt of Penn'a, as of the 1st of Dec. 1863, 49,449,213 82

Amount of Public Commonwealth bonds redeemed during the fiscal year ending Nov. 30, 1863, viz:

On loan Act, May 4, 1860, 388,499 78

On loan Act, May 4, 1860, 100 00

On loan Act, May 4, 1860, 8 26

Total, 388,608 04

On Dec. 1st, 1863, 49,449,213 82

Debt, viz: 6 per cent, \$400,000 00

5 per cent, 35,700,000 45

4 per cent, 200,000 00

Total, 385,700,000 45

On Dec. 1st, 1863, 49,449,213 82

Indebtedness, 336,250,786 63

On the 1st of May 15, 1863, authorizing the issue of a loan of \$300,000,00, a tax of half mill was laid on real and personal property, to furnish a fund for redeeming the same. I recommend that the proceeds of the sinking fund be directed to the manner invested, or that they should apply such proceeds directly to the purchase of certificates of the military loan, and cancel such certificates as shall be purchased.

THE STATE FINANCES.

Although our finances are in a healthy condition, it is necessary to invite the serious attention of the Legislature to the consideration of the means of maintaining them unimpaired in future.

By the act of 12 June, 1840, it was provided that the interest on the State loan should be paid in specie or its equivalent, and that whenever the funds in the Treasury should be of less value than specie, the difference in value should be ascertained and certified to the Governor, who should thereupon issue his warrant to the agents or banks authorized to pay such interest on behalf of the Commonwealth, to draw such difference to parties receiving the interest, or at the option of the parties pay the same in specie.

By the act of 11th April, 1862, it was provided that for the purpose of paying in specie or its equivalent, all interest that would otherwise be paid by the Commonwealth, should be paid in specie or its equivalent, and that whenever the funds in the Treasury should be of less value than specie, the difference in value should be ascertained and certified to the Governor, who should thereupon issue his warrant to the agents or banks authorized to pay such interest on behalf of the Commonwealth, to draw such difference to parties receiving the interest, or at the option of the parties pay the same in specie.

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11th April, 1862.) and who should refuse to redeem their notes in specie, demand, at any time within ten days upon or after the time when such interest should become due, should thereafter, when required by the State Treasurer, by notice in writing, pay into the State Treasury, its proportion to the capital stock paid in each bank, their ratable proportion of such premium for gold or its equivalent, as should have been actually paid by the State.

By the act of 30th of January, 1863, it was provided that the State Treasurer should exchange with the banks an amount of currency sufficient to pay the interest on the State debt falling due on the first days of February and August, 1863, for the same amount of coin, and should give to the banks specie certificates of exchange, not transferable, pledging the faith of the State to return said coin in exchange for gold currency, at the time, on or before the first Monday of March, 1864, such certificates to bear interest at the rate of 2 1/2 per cent. per annum.

Under the provisions of the act of 1862, certain banks paid into the State Treasury \$140,768 30 as an equivalent for coin for the interest on the public debt.

Under the act of 1863, specie certificates have been given to the banks, amounting in the whole to \$1,958,901 97, which, with the accruing interest, will fall due on the first Monday of March next.

An existing provision of this act were of a temporary character, the only acts now in force on the subject are those of 1840 and 1862, as mentioned, under which it will be the duty of the State authorities to pay the interest on the 1st of February, 1864, and thereafter, in coin or its equivalent, and to the banks that may be authorized by the act of 1862, for reimbursement of the premium paid by the Commonwealth.

In the face of all difficulties this Commonwealth, actuated by a sentiment which does its people honor, has hitherto paid its interest in coin or its equivalent.

Existing circumstances make it necessary to consider now the fair extent of her just obligations.

The experiences of the times have compelled the Government of the United States to issue large amounts of Treasury notes in circulation, which are not redeemable in coin, and which form the great mass of our circulating medium.

It is our duty as a loyal State—it is our interest as a State whose welfare, and even safety, depend emphatically upon the maintenance of the credit and the success of the military operations of the General Government, to do nothing to impair the credit or embarrass its measures. On the contrary, we owe it to ourselves and to our posterity to give an active support to its efforts to quell the monster rebellion which is still raging, and thus restore peace to our distracted country.

The Government, and we could not, without great indecency, attempt to refuse its currency in payment of taxes and other debts due to the Commonwealth.

In 1840 the case was very different. The difficulties then arose from the suspension of specie payments by our State banks, mere local and private corporations, and the State intended to provide against loss to creditors by reason of such suspension. An exigency like the present could not have then been foreseen by the Legislature; and it is to be inferred, therefore, that they could not have intended to provide for it.

We derive our system of public loans from Europe, and the true extent of our obligation is to be ascertained by referring to the known established practice of European Governments prior to the dates when our loans were effected. I mean, of course, such of those Governments as were held to have maintained their national credit.

Their policy has been to issue the uniform practice of such Governments to pay their interest in paper currency, however depreciated, during a legalized suspension of specie payments. An observable instance of this is afforded by the course of the British Government, which, during twenty years, from 1797 to 1825, has issued bank notes prohibited by law from paying out coin for any purpose, paid the interest on its public debts in bank notes, which during a great part of that time were at a heavy discount, sometimes amounting to thirty per cent. or thereabout. Their necessities then were not greater than ours are now.

Among ourselves, at the present time, Massachusetts (whose debt is believed to be very small) pays the interest in coin. Ohio and Indiana pay in currency. In New York it is not known what will be done. Her Legislature, by concurrent resolution, ordered the interest to be paid in coin to foreign stockholders, in April last.

At the present rate of premium on gold, the sum necessary to pay on an amount, sufficient to discharge the annual interest on the State debt would be more than \$1,000,000, and to meet this, an additional taxation, to that extent, would be unavoidable.

The demands on the Treasury for other necessary purposes must probably be such as to render it imprudent to throw any part of this expenditure on the existing surplus.—To borrow money from year to year to pay the interest on past loans, would, of course, be wholly inadvisable. To raise the sum of 1862 in part, an attempt to throw the payment of this large premium annually on the banks, would be not only flagrantly unjust, but quite impracticable. I recommend the whole subject to the careful consideration of the Legislature. Some legislation ought to be had on it before the close of the present month. In my opinion the Commonwealth will have fulfilled her obligations by providing for the payment of her interest in the currency of the Government. If the Legislature should see fit to continue to pay it in coin, it will be their duty to levy forthwith the necessary tax necessary for that purpose. I must, in passing, observe that the plan adopted by one of the States of paying coin to foreign, and currency to be wholly unwise, and founded on no legitimate principle.

RENEWING BANK CHARTERS.

At the close of the last session, nineteen bills renewing the charters of certain banks for another period of five years were presented to me. Of these I have (for reasons which will be hereafter communicated), withheld my signature from one and approved the remainder. I have been led to sign them by the considerations that the banks of the Commonwealth pay a large revenue (nearly \$400,000), which the State can ill afford to lose, and that in the present condition of the country, it would be impossible to drive so much capital out of active use, or force it into new employments.

The National Banking system affords sufficient inducements, capital will voluntarily take that direction. It is proper to ob-

serve that the charters of most of the banks in question expire at an early period, while, in consequence of the invasion of the State during the last summer, they could not have been reasonably expected to give the necessary notice of renewed applications for recharter.

I recommend an extension of the time during which the banks are now relieved from penalties for not paying their obligations in coin.

SALARIES OF PUBLIC OFFICERS.

The increased expenses of living invite attention to the salaries of our public officers. Those of the Secretary of the Commonwealth, Auditor-General and State Treasurer, and of the clerks in their employment, are, in my opinion, too low, especially in view of the exigencies of the times have greatly enhanced the labor and responsibilities of all, and, in the case of the heads of those departments enforce a constant attendance at Harrisburg, which was not formerly required.

MILITARY CLAIMS.

Under the Act of 16th April, 1862, and its supplement passed 22d April, 1863, the Adjutant-General, Quartermaster-General and Commissary-General have been acting as the Board of military Claims. They have up to this time, approved claims to the amount of \$106,415 81, and others have been already presented to the further amount of \$332,120 29, which have not yet been acted on.

Under the Act of 22d April 1863 (P. L. 523), the Court of Common Pleas appointed three appraisers to ascertain the damage done in the counties on the southern border by the militia called into service in September, 1862, by the Anderson Cavalry in the same month, and by the rebels in their raid on the 10th and 11th October, 1862.

The appraisers have not yet completed the performance of their duties. When their report shall have been made to the Court of Common Pleas and affirmed, in whole or in part, by that Court, it will be the duty of the Governor to claim the payment of the amounts from the General Government, and on failure to secure the same, then to report to the next Legislature, recommending such action as he may deem just and proper.

TRANSPORTATION AND TELEGRAPH FUND.

The expenses of the Transportation and Telegraph Departments during the past year have been as follows:—

Paid out of appropriation made by the Military Loan Act, 1862	\$15,658 57
Unpaid (the appropriation being exhausted)	15,764 79
Outstanding liabilities, estimated at	5,900 00
Total	34,323 66

These expenses have been mainly incurred in keeping up the necessary correspondence of the military departments and in the transportation of sick and wounded and the bodies of our volunteers, and have been reported by the Chief of Transportation, herewith communicated. I recommend an appropriation to meet the deficiency, and also to carry on the service of this department hereafter.

By the thirteenth section of the Act of the 15th May, 1861, the sum of \$200,000 was appropriated to be expended by the Governor for the compensation of such persons as he might require to serve the Commonwealth in the military organization of the State or the General Government, and for the expenses incident to the business in which they might be employed.

I have, according to law, settled annual accounts of the expenditure of this fund in the Auditor-General's office, to which the Legislature is referred. The unexpected balance is now \$54,521 98. A further sum should be appropriated in like manner. Out of this fund I have paid the persons whom I found it necessary to employ in the military department, and the expenses of the agency which I was compelled to establish in Washington to attend to the interests and welfare of our volunteers. The continuance of this agency and the establishment of a similar one in the West are of vital importance to them. I recommend the passage of an act authorizing the appointment of agents at Washington and Nashville, and defining their duties, which should include the collection of all bounty, back pay, pensions, etc., due to Pennsylvania.

On this subject I refer the Legislature to the report of Colonel R. Biddle Roberts, late Agent of the State, at Washington, herewith communicated, and commend to your careful examination.

PAYMENT OF THE MILITIA.

On the invasion of the State during the last summer, the President made a call for militia, and with his assent I subsequently made a call for volunteer militia for the defence of the State. Under these calls men were assembled and organized with promptness, after the reality of the emergency came to be understood by our people. The General Government clothed and subsisted this force, and agreed to pay it, but no appropriation for that purpose had been made by Congress, the President and Secretary of War, promised it the money should be advanced from other quarters; to recommend its immediate repayment on the meeting of Congress. It is understood that steps have been already taken to fulfill this pledge. Several of the banks cheerfully and readily advanced the necessary funds to the amount of \$671,476 43, on my promise to recommend to the legislature an appropriation to repay them in case Congress should fail to make one. I accordingly, make that recommendation most emphatically. Should it be necessary, I will hereafter, in a special message, give the details and correspondence relating to this subject.

New York and New Jersey, under the President's call, sent regiments to assist in our defense, for which our thanks are due to those States, our good neighbors.

THE NATIONAL CEMENT.

After the battle of Gettysburg, in which loyal volunteers from eighteen States, including Pennsylvania, were engaged, it appeared to me proper that all those States should unite in establishing a cemetery on the spot in which their soldiers who had fallen in that conflict should be honorably interred, I accordingly appointed David Wills, Esq., of Gettysburg, my agent, and through him a site was purchased at a cost of \$2,475 87, and the conveyance made to the Commonwealth. On communicating with the authorities of the other States, they all readily agreed to become parties to the arrangement, and on the 18th of November last, the Cemetery was dedicated, with appropriate ceremonies, in the presence of the President of the United States, the Governors of the States concerned, and other high officers, State and national.

On the 19th day of Dec. on the invitation of Mr. Wills, Commissioners representing the States interested in the Cemetery met in Harrisburg, and agreed upon a plan for

its improvement and care in the future, and the apportionment of the sum of money required to the several States, which is herewith communicated. The expenses attending the establishment of this cemetery, including the cost of the site and of removing the bodies of the slain, have thus far amounted to \$5,209 38, and an appropriation will be required to pay these expenses, and to meet our portion of those attending its future maintenance. It will appear by the proceedings of the Commissioners that their due proportions of the expenses already incurred are to be refunded by the States on whose account they were made. It is justly and an important duty with fidelity and to my entire satisfaction.

RELIEF OF SOLDIERS' FAMILIES.

The act for the relief of families of volunteers in service may require some revision. It is alleged that in some parts of the State the county authorities are backward in executing the law. If this be so, the members from the different counties will be aware of the fact, and will be most ready to make such further enactments as may be proper.

I commend to the prompt attention of the Legislature the subject of relief of poor orphans of our soldiers who have given, or shall give, their lives to the country during this crisis. In my opinion, their maintenance and education should be provided for by the State. Failing other natural friends of ability to provide for them, they should be honorably received and fostered as children of the Commonwealth. The \$50,000 heretofore given by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, referred to in my last annual message, by the Act of the 22d April, 1863, I recommend that this sum, with such other means as the Legislature may think fit, be applied to this end, in such manner as may be thought most expedient and effective.—In anticipation of the adoption of a more perfect system of relief, I recommend that provision be made for securing the admission of such children into existing educational establishments, to be there clothed, nurtured and instructed at the public expense. I make this recommendation earnestly, feeling assured that in doing so, I represent the wishes of the patriotic, the benevolent, and the good of the State.

LOYAL EAST TENNESSEANS.

I invite the attention of the Legislature to the condition of the loyal people of East Tennessee, who are in a most deplorable and, and appeal with irresistible force alike to your sympathies and your sense of justice. Their whole country has been laid waste by the contending armies of the government and rebels. Four times have large armies passed over their district, destroying or carrying off all that has been gathered for the approaching winter, and now the women and children are left in a state of destitution.

The representations made by sundry gentlemen of the highest respectability, from that State, are of the most heart-rending description, and I recommend that provision be made for their relief, and that they be invited to call on the Executive of the State, which was accordingly made. Under these calls 5166 of the men of Pennsylvania were assembled in the Department of General Brooks, and 31,422 in that of General Couch.

Early in June, Major-General Couch arrived at Harrisburg, and assumed command of his department, which he has since exercised with the soldier-like promptness, energy and discretion which were to be expected from his known character.

The rebels having actually entered the State in some force, and the approach of their whole army being imminent, the President made a requisition for militia from that and some of the neighboring States, and several regiments from New York and New Jersey were promptly sent, and our own volunteer militia began to assemble; but some uncertainties arising, the President was compelled to call by the Executive of the State, which was accordingly made. Under these calls 5166 of the men of Pennsylvania were assembled in the Department of General Brooks, and 31,422 in that of General Couch. To give the details, or even a summary of the operations which ensued, would be practically within the limits of my message. It is unnecessary to do so, as I have recommended the adoption of measures for preserving the history of our several regiments and other organizations, and in that history the events to which I have referred will be recorded. It is due however, to the brave men who have thus far been called upon to call by the Executive of the State, which was accordingly made. Under these calls 5166 of the men of Pennsylvania were assembled in the Department of General Brooks, and 31,422 in that of General Couch. To give the details, or even a summary of the operations which ensued, would be practically within the limits of my message. It is unnecessary to do so, as I have recommended the adoption of measures for preserving the history of our several regiments and other organizations, and in that history the events to which I have referred will be recorded. It is due however, to the brave men who have thus far been called upon to call by the Executive of the State, which was accordingly made. Under these calls 5166 of the men of Pennsylvania were assembled in the Department of General Brooks, and 31,422 in that of General Couch.

3 By existing laws municipal corporations are to deduct and pay into the Treasury the tax on all loans contracted by them. It is believed that a large addition would accrue to the revenue by the extension of this provision to all counties and to all corporations, private or public.

I recommend that it be so extended.

4 A tax on the gross receipts of railroads and canal companies would, it is believed, be productive and not oppressive.

Upon satisfactory reports, according to law, made by Col. John A. Wright, I have drawn my warrant for the delivery to the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad Company of another million of the bonds deposited in the State Treasury. Four millions of said bonds have therefore been now delivered. There can be no reasonable doubt of the early completion of the work, and, when completed, it is confidently expected that the bonds held by the State, secured on the road for \$3,500,000, will become good interest-paying securities.

DIFFERENT DEPARTMENTS.

I refer to the Auditor-General's and State Treasurer's reports for the details of our financial affairs, and the reports of the Surveyor-General, Adjutant-General, Quartermaster-General, Surgeon-General, Agent at Washington, Chief of Transportation and Telegraph Department, and Superintendent of Common Schools, in regard to their several departments.

BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG.

In May last it was believed, from information received, that General Lee intended to invade this State. Communications on the subject were immediately sent to Washington, urging that preparations for effective defense should not be delayed. Accordingly the War Department erected two new military departments, viz: The Department of the Mountains, including that portion of the State lying west of the mountains, to be commanded by Major General Brooks, and the Department of the Susquehanna, comprising the remainder of the State, and to be commanded by Major General Couch.

Early in June, Major-General Couch arrived at Harrisburg, and assumed command of his department, which he has since exercised with the soldier-like promptness, energy and discretion which were to be expected from his known character.

The rebels having actually entered the State in some force, and the approach of their whole army being imminent, the President made a requisition for militia from that and some of the neighboring States, and several regiments from New York and New Jersey were promptly sent, and our own volunteer militia began to assemble; but some uncertainties arising, the President was compelled to call by the Executive of the State, which was accordingly made. Under these calls 5166 of the men of Pennsylvania were assembled in the Department of General Brooks, and 31,422 in that of General Couch. To give the details, or even a summary of the operations which ensued, would be practically within the limits of my message. It is unnecessary to do so, as I have recommended the adoption of measures for preserving the history of our several regiments and other organizations, and in that history the events to which I have referred will be recorded. It is due however, to the brave men who have thus far been called upon to call by the Executive of the State, which was accordingly made. Under these calls 5166 of the men of Pennsylvania were assembled in the Department of General Brooks, and 31,422 in that of General Couch.

in the public service out of the State the right to vote, be passed promptly and submitted to a vote of the people at as early a day as possible, so that such citizens may exercise their right of suffrage at all future elections. This would be only doing justice to the brave men who are periling their lives in our defense.

VOLUNTEERING.

It is highly important that we should replenish the ranks of our regiments in the field, and supply the places of those volunteers whose terms will soon expire and who may decline further service. I am happy to say that a large proportion of our regiments are re-enlisting. Efforts are making by myself and by the people in various portions of the State, to procure a sufficient number of volunteers, and with a promise of success, provided a reasonable time be allowed for the purpose. Meanwhile persons professing to be officers and agents from some other States are most improperly endeavoring to seduce our citizens into their service by extravagant bounties and promises.

The 12th section of the act of 15th May 1861, prohibits any volunteers from leaving the State without the authority of the Gov. and I now recommend the passage of a law imposing penalties by fine and imprisonment on all individuals who shall endeavor to procure or aid and assist in procuring any person in this State to enlist in the volunteer service of any other State. Many of our counties and townships have filled their ranks with a large expense, and in other cases they are in course of doing the same by offers of liberal bounties and provisions for the families of volunteers, and it is not right that these patriotic efforts should be embarrassed by interference from beyond our borders, especially as we cannot, in these circumstances, offer bounties by the State, without the injustice of compelling the counties and townships which have already contributed largely in that way, to assist in paying, by taxation for the deficiency of others.

LEGISLATION HURRY—ITS EFFECTS.

I feel it to be my duty to call your attention to the pernicious practice of leaving many bills to be hurried through at the close of the session. During the last ten days of the last session 390 bills were presented to the Legislature, and of these the most important character. The whole number of bills presented to me during the session was 715. In consequence of this habit, not only are bills passed without an opportunity to either House for a proper consideration of their provisions, but the bills are hurried through either to signature without examination, or to hold them over perhaps to the public inconvenience. It may often happen that a bill not approved by reason of a single objectionous clause, might, if there were time, be replaced, omitting the objectionable provision. In connection with the subject of legislation, I must refer to our signature, many of our bills, the most important character. The whole number of bills presented to me during the session was 715. 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