

The Public Works of Pennsylvania—Sale of the Main Line—An Outline of the Bill.

The bill for the sale of the Main Line of the Public Works, as it passed both branches of the Legislature, has received the signature of the Governor, and is therefore a law. It is a measure of much importance, and a brief outline of its principal provisions will be read with interest.

1. The first section make it the duty of the Governor, within ten days after his approval of the Act, to cause to be advertised daily until the day of sale, in one or more newspapers of Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Harrisburg, Boston and New York, a notice that the Main Line of Public Works will be exposed to sale at the Merchants' Exchange, or at some other public place in the city of Philadelphia, on a day to be selected by him, not more than ninety days after the passage of the Act.

2. At the time and place so selected, the whole Main Line, namely, to wit: the Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad, the Canal from Columbia to the Junction of Duncan's Island, the Juniata Canal from thence to Hollidaysburg, the Allegheny Portage Railroad, including the new road to avoid the Inclined Planes, and the Canal from Johnstown to Pittsburg, with all the property thereunto appertaining, shall be offered for sale.

3. It shall be lawful for any person or persons, Railroad or Canal Company, now incorporated or which may hereafter be incorporated, to become the purchaser of said Main Line, for a sum not less than eight millions of dollars, provided that if, the Pennsylvania Railroad Company become the purchasers, they shall pay a sum of not less than nine millions of dollars, but on the consumption of the arrangement, so much of the Act incorporating the said Company as requires the payment of a tax upon tonnage passing over their road, shall become null and void.

4. The purchaser shall within ninety days pay ten per cent, of the purchase money, and the residue thereof in ten equal instalments.

5. Besides the lien on the said Works provided in the Act, the purchaser shall as a further security, deposit in the State Treasury, State Loans to the amount equal to the cash payment for one-fourth of the whole purchase money.

6. All payments to the commonwealth by the purchasers for the principal shall be made in certificates of State Loans at par, and the interest shall be paid in cash annually.

7. The purchasers may at any time before the maturity of the bonds given, pay off and satisfy the principle, on giving due notice.

8. As soon as the bonds and additional security shall be given, the whole Main Line shall be transferred.

9. All Superintendents and other officers of roads and canals, shall continue to discharge their duties until removed or re-appointed, and their official bonds, shall ensure to the use of the purchasers. So also of all moneys received by them.

10. The purchase money unpaid, shall be exempt from the payment of State taxes.

11. It shall be lawful for the purchasers to purchase, lease or use the Harrisburg, Portsmouth, Mount Joy and Lancaster Railroads, or to construct a road from the western terminus of the Philadelphia and Columbia Railroad, to the Allegheny Portage.

12. The purchasers shall at all times maintain a continuous railroad and canal communication between Philadelphia and Pittsburg, and keep the same in good operating condition; and shall also, at all times, keep open and in good order and condition, for public use.

13. It shall be lawful for said purchasers, their successors and assigns, and their officers, engineers, contractors and agents, to enter upon any lands adjoining, or in the neighborhood of the works, and dig, take and carry away therefrom, any materials necessary for enlarging, making, altering, deepening or improving said works, or any portion thereof.

14. The purchasers shall have power and authority to own and employ locomotive engines, cars, boats and horses, and to convey passengers and freight of whatsoever description, within reasonable time after presentation, on said works, or any portion thereof, and charge and receive tolls and fare for the passage and transportation of persons and freight, and said purchasers, their successors and assigns, shall have the exclusive right to furnish all the motive power on said railroads: *Provided*, that all persons with cars, horses, boats and freight may pass over said works, they paying toll therefor, and the use of said works shall be governed by such general rules and regulations as such purchasers may from time to time ordain, establish and publish; but no person shall, without the consent of such purchasers, be permitted to use horses, or other animal power, on said railroads, or steam on said canals: *And provided*: that no discrimination in tolls or charges, or in the priority of passage through the locks, shall ever be made against any boats or tonnage passing to or from the Susquehanna division of the Pennsylvania canal, nor shall any greater amount be charged upon such boats and tonnage than that now paid the Commonwealth.

15. Should any company already incorporated by this Commonwealth become the purchasers, they shall possess, hold and use the same as part of their original act of incorporation, and any supplements thereto, so far modified, however, as to embrace all the privileges granted by this act in addition thereto, and all provisions in said original act, and any supplements inconsistent with the privileges herein granted, shall be, and the same are hereby repealed.

Section 16. That all moneys derived from said sale shall be either paid to the sinking fund, and applied to the payment of the State debt, according to the provisions of the act entitled "An Act to provide a sinking fund and to provide for the gradual and certain extinguishment of the debt of the Commonwealth," approved April tenth, one thousand eight hundred and forty-nine, or used in payment of the interest on the loans of the Commonwealth.

Section 17. That should it be ascertained at any time before the payment of the last instalment provided for, that further legislation is required for passing to the purchasers, their successors or assigns, all the title and interest of this Commonwealth to said main line, or any portion thereof, then the faith of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania is hereby pledged for the enactment of all laws and performance of all acts necessary to carry out the true intent and meaning of this act.

Section 18. That should no sale take place

at the time appointed, as provided for in this act, then it shall be the duty of the Governor to invite proposals for the private purchase or lease of all works, and submit the same to the Legislature at its next session.

Section 19. That said purchasers of the main line under the provisions of this act, shall, within twelve months after receiving possession of said works, relay the south track of the Philadelphia and Columbia railroad, where the same has not been laid with a heavy rail, and the rates of toll now charged per mile on way freight on the Columbia railroad shall not be increased where the distance exceeds forty miles, and for all distances on the canal exceeding forty miles, the charge for way tolls shall be in proportion to the distance carried.

Section 20. That all necessary expenses incurred by the Governor under the provisions of this act, shall be paid out of any money in the treasury, not otherwise appropriated upon warrants drawn by him.

A Patriotic Letter.

We publish below, the eloquent, wise, patriotic and christian letter of the distinguished statesman whose name heads this article. Such a letter is worthy of such a man. Men like Cass, Clay, Calhoun, Webster, and those still greater names, Jackson, Jefferson, and the immortal Washington, could never sympathize, much less be associated with so foul a thing as Know-Nothing intolerance and falsehood.

The class of men to which Cass belongs, ranks with the proudest list of world rulers to be found in all history. The genius, fame and virtue of such men will never be found tarnished by contact with the leprosy of bigoted fanaticism and religious persecution. The iniquitous sinks of Know-Nothing bigotry and oppression are fitting places only for cast-off fifth-rate politicians of desperate fortunes, and the ignorant herd of fanatics who are ruled by designing men through appeals to their animal excitability and uncultivated instinct. Democrats of '48, and honest men of all parties, and of no party, listen to the alarm voice of an aged patriot?

Detroit, March 15, 1855.

DEAR SIR:—It is now more than two years since I have attended a public festival, and the same afflicting circumstances which led me to adopt this course, yet operate to render me indisposed to change it. While, therefore, I thank you and those associated with you, for the invitation to attend the celebration of St. Patrick's day on the 17th, I beg leave to be excused for declining its acceptance.

But, though I shall not be with you on that interesting occasion, yet I can realize and appreciate the feeling with which you will assemble to recall the glories of the land of your birth or descent, in this land of your hopes and homes; and to do honor to the memory of the Apostle of Christianity, who first carried the Gospel of Jesus to the pagan inhabitants of Ireland. Obeying the injunction of the Scriptures, he "added knowledge to virtue," though in these latter days we are called upon to glory in ignorance, and to find our claims to confidence upon *know nothing*. Your illustrious missionary, belonged to the great Order of know something—to that class of it indeed which knows a great deal, and he deserves the gratitude of mankind for imparting what he knew to others, instead of endeavoring to "darken counsel by words without knowledge." Honorable or otherwise to one of the benefactors of the human race, and let us render it the more freely now, when local and sectarian prejudices are striving to create a distinction among us, as unjust as they are unconstitutional. But we have nothing eventually to fear from error or oppression, while, as Mr. Jefferson well said, "reason is left free to combat it." That freedom is a portion of our heritage and it will triumph over this delusion as it has triumphed over many a one heretofore, and will triumph over many a one hereafter; those who have participated in it will awaken to the conviction that the worth of an American citizen does not depend upon the place of his birth, nor his claim to confidence upon his religious faith, and upon the mode in which he worships that God, who is equally the God of the Catholic and of the Protestant—who guided and protected our fathers in the days of their troubles and trials and will we humbly hope, guide and protect us and our children whenever troubles and trials shall beset our National path. There is no danger, if we only appreciate the blessings we enjoy in a spirit of mutual conciliation and forbearance, and with thankfulness to Him who gave them, and may take them away.

I am dear sir, with great regard,
Truly Yours, LEWIS CASS.
Col. W. O'CALLAGHAN, President.

Protection to Thieves and Burglars.
We take the following from a late number of the Philadelphia *Pennsylvanian*:

"A short time since, the Episcopal church situated near Bustleton was entered burglarously during the night, and every thing valuable which could be taken away by the robbers was carried off. In addition to this, the most indecent and offensive acts were perpetrated while the thieves were in the sanctuary dedicated to the services of the Great Author. We could really believe, from what we have seen of the workings of Know-Nothingism outside of the lodges, and from the sacrilegious and awful character of the oaths administered, that its members were prepared for any crime, but we had not supposed that the signs of the order were used as security against arrest whenever one of their number was guilty of a heinous offence. But such appears to be the case. After the robbery had been committed at the church, and as the Know-Nothing thieves were about to leave, they pinned a three-cornered piece of white paper to the door, with two of their cabalistic signs used in secret order written upon it. One of the signs resembled a scoop net, with the handle attached—a very appropriate sign, as they had scooped everything valuable out of the church—and the other was like a pot hook, with the lower crook greatly enlarged, and containing two straight marks within the lower half-circle."

"We have heard of these signs before, and though never explained to us, we think that we have deciphered their meaning. It is as follows: 'The net has a treble meaning, and is to notify the Know-Nothing police officers that the thieves belong to their order; that they had gathered all that was to be had in the place robbed, of an any value, and that they (the policemen) were not to spread the net of the law for their detection. The

handle of the net running through to the upper part of the circle, and thus dividing it into two parts, was to indicate that the thieves would share with the policemen."

"The second sign, or pot-hook, was to notify the officers of their obligation, to the effect that all the members of the secret order must hang together for individual safety, and the two straight marks within the lower half-circle indicate that two persons committed the act, and now throw themselves into the embrace or body of the order for protection."

"The man who in a free country like ours, joins a party of which he is ashamed to avow himself a member, shows distinctly that there is something wrong in that party.—He shows that he himself thinks so. Such is the case with the Know-nothing party, which professes to be temporary only in its nature.

If its members are ashamed of it now, when it is new and in the full tide of triumph, what will become of them when, exhausted by its convulsive effort, and demoralized by the evil elements that have contributed to give it vitality, it fails to pieces like a rope of sand? In that dark day the young men who have been tempted into it—especially the Democratic young men—who have talent and ambition, would give the world to expunge their names from that fatal roll. But that will be impossible. The roll will stand an enduring monument of blindness, folly and frenzy. The Order of which we speak will be the grave of many a politician. Hereafter—and that hereafter is not far distant—the man (this is especially true of Democrats) who shall be proved to have joined the Know-Nothings and to have adhered to them until necessity, not choice, forced him to leave, will be a marked man, a doomed politician. Political antecedents know no oblivion—political sins no forgiveness. This will be a new sin, and revolting as new. The Tories of the Revolution, the men of Hartford Convention memory; the blue-light Federalists, experienced no more terrible retribution than will be experienced by those of whom we speak.

If insensible to the appeals of common sense and patriotic virtues, they should at least heed the suggestions of selfish interest. They should seek a respite from their frenzy and think calmly and gravely of their future. They should quit, and quit instantly, that party in its nature cannot last, that does not aspire to permanence, that raises bubbles only to burst them. They will fare far better in the future by submitting to the proper discipline of a regular, well ordered, and historical party, than by seeking the fleeting honors of this new and ephemeral order. The rewards of such an organization will be like:

"Dead sea fruits, that charm the eye,
But turn to ashes on the lip."

The time will come when those who cling to this Order will experience a bitter remorse. It may succeed for a time, but it will soon fail, and when it fails it will crush all within its unhallowed walls. It will be a great political grave-yard.

When the reaction takes place, as take place it must, those who now are jubilant will then be odious. In all the bitterness of remorse they may say, "our damned spot," but that spot will still remain. No penitence, however sincere, will be accepted by posterity. Their sins cannot be "burnt and purged away." For such political sins there will be no forgiveness. The only hope and the only safety are in an immediate abandonment of this new and Secret Order.—*Washington Sentinel.*

The Secret of the Abolitionism of the Secret Party.

"The reason why the know-nothings of the North are so deeply committed to the abolitionists, and so completely in the hands of abolition leaders, is that the rank and file of the democratic party, now boldly opposing the secret movement, is a thorough national and constitutional organization. The secret schemers have no other recourse.—The democracy refuse to lead them and they are, therefore, driven to capture into those combinations which are pledged, body and soul, to a fanatical war upon the rights of the States. It is a fair exchange between them. The know-nothings say to the abolitionists, Here is our machinery, give us your brains to conduct it; and the abolitionists accept the offer, and say, We will do so, and, in return for your acceptance of our creed of treason to the rights of the States, we will take yours of hostility to the rights of conscience and the claims of the adopted citizens.—This is all, the more easy of acceptance by the secret schemers have no other recourse.—The democracy refuse to lead them and they are, therefore, driven to capture into those combinations which are pledged, body and soul, to a fanatical war upon the rights of the States. It is a fair exchange between them. 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