

Robt. Thomas
Democrat and Sentinel.

THE BLESSINGS OF GOVERNMENT, LIKE THE DEW OF HEAVEN, SHOULD BE DISTRIBUTED ALIKE UPON THE RICH AND THE POOR.

NEW SERIES.

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[Correspondence of the Daily News.]
THE MAIN LINE.

EBENSBURG, July 4, 1855.

MR. EDITOR:—As I perceive, your valuable journal is not in the employ of the Central Railroad Company, permit me through its columns to call the attention of the people of Pennsylvania to the recent outrage on their interests committed by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company.

Their great chain of improvements, connecting the Delaware and the Ohio—improvements which cost the State over \$15,000,000, which have built up the cities of Philadelphia and Pittsburg, which have immensely promoted the interests of the State, and have always been regarded as the proudest monument of the wisdom and enterprise of the Commonwealth, has been abandoned—given up to delapidation and decay crowds of boats are no longer seen on the canal, and the stillness of the night, and our quiet slumbers, are no longer disturbed by the discordant notes of the boatman's horn. The Pennsylvania Railroad Company has triumphed; all competition between the State improvements and the Railroad for the immense freights between the East and West, is at an end; and the Railroad Company, by a short cut, has realized the consummation of its longed-for desire,—a monopoly of the carrying trade between the East and the West.

To accomplish this object, the company has been laboring for several years, and without any very punitions regard to the means used. The Company had done little more than effect an organization, when it commenced praying the Legislature to repeal the five mill tonnage tax. It was reduced to three mills. But this generous reduction by the State was not sufficient. The Company next, through its subsidized press, and by its officers and satellites, began to importune the Legislature to sell this chain of improvements. There was nothing said against the Delaware, the Susquehanna, the North and West Branch Divisions; no proposition was brought forward in the Legislature to sell these, or any of these Divisions. That was entirely unnecessary. Whether they were productive of revenue or not, honestly managed or not, was a matter of not the slightest consequence. These divisions of the State improvements did not come in competition with the Pennsylvania Railroad, and the State might therefore, with propriety, be permitted to retain them. But a general hue and cry were raised against the Main Line; the cry of corruption and bad management, that they were unproductive, that they were and must ever be a burden on the treasury and the people; that if not sold in a short time, they would be utterly worthless, utterly destroyed by the Railroad, and that then the State would not be able to sell, or even give them away; the press in the interest of the Company from one end of the State to the other, from the organ of the Company. "The North American," down to the little eight by ten sheets in the country, with the free tickets of the Company in the pockets of their editors; the officers and their outside partners and dependents, from the President down to the runners of the road, joined in the cry and swelled the chorus.

Many of the members of the Legislature, with free tickets, &c., in their pockets, were easily persuaded that utter ruin and bankruptcy would speedily overwhelm the State, if this Main Line was not immediately sold, and certain provisions in the Company's charter touching the three mill tax, &c., were not repealed, and, accordingly, the bill of 1854 for the sale, &c., fixing the minimum at \$10,000,000, was passed. But the Company, encouraged by their success, and believing from the then state of the money market, that no company could be found to complete with it for the Line, resolved that it would not bid, and published its resolution, with a report carefully drawn up depreciating the value of these improvements, and thereby deterring others also from bidding. It was wisely considered that if no sale should take place, by again raising the hue and cry of corruption and bad management, &c., a much more favorable bill for the Company, could be obtained. The event showed the sagacity of the Company. No sale took place; and now a more favorable bill for the sale, and for a less sum must be obtained, notwithstanding the new Allegheny Portage Road, at a great cost to the State, had in the mean time been nearly completed,

and an annual expense of about \$300,000 thereby saved to the State. To effect this object the more certainly, the track must be cleared of all obstructions. The Board of Canal Commissioners and the forwarding companies, had heretofore been found antagonistic bodies, and rather troublesome obstacles to the procuring of just such legislation on the subject as was desired. And to those two bodies, those who were observing with some alarm the movements of this Corporation, looked for protection and defence against its machinations. But with such a mammoth Corporation, these small obstacles were not to be endured, and the hopes of protection and defence, from these quarters, were doomed to bitter disappointment. When the Legislature met last winter, by some strange, *memerie* influence, the Canal Commissioners and the Forwarding Companies were suddenly converted from enemies into friends, and they and the officers of the Company, and their dependants and stool-pigeons, were all found co-operating like a band of brothers in accomplishing the same common object. A general hue and cry of corruption and bad management, and of the worthlessness of this Main Line, were again raised, the Canal Commissioners leading in the chase, and the "North American" and the smaller papers in the employ of the Company bringing up the rear. The Legislature was again assured that the Main Line had always been unproductive, and a burden on the treasury; that it had never been of any value, and was growing worse and worse every day; that it was falling into delapidation and decay, and would soon be worse than worthless; that unless sold without delay to the Railroad Company, and at a very low figure, in a short time, it could not be given away. As if not sufficiently enlightened, by all these disinterested friends of the public improvements, and the State, touching the public interests, the Chief Engineer of the Railroad, with an exuberance of patriotism, and an excess of generosity and public spirit, *above all praise*, published at his own expense of course, a pamphlet of seventy-six pages, entitled, "The Main Line of the Pennsylvania State Improvements; its History, Cost, Revenue, Expenditures, and Present and Future Prospective Value," laid a handsome copy on the desk of each member of that body, and scattered them broadcast, without money, and without price, all over the State. The name of this author and public benefactor, of course from motives of delicacy, was carefully concealed from a wondering and grateful public; and that his readers might be duly impressed with his pamphlet, and his disinterested motives be above suspicion he informs them in his "prefatory remarks" that "the perusal of these pages may possibly convey the impression that this publication has been made by the Pennsylvania Railroad Company for the purpose of depreciating the value of the property of the State, and securing a purchase on more favorable terms. Such, however, is not the fact, neither the President nor any member of the Board of Directors of this Company has had any participation directly or indirectly, in the preparation of this pamphlet, nor was the manuscript seen by any of them previous to its publication.

As might have been expected from the disinterested motives of the writer and the objects in view these improvements according to the pamphlet are sufficiently worthless, their past history rough enough, and their future prospects depressingly gloomy: "The Main Line has no cheering future; a darker history awaits it than the past has furnished." The best thing that could be done for the State, would be to fill up the canal; indeed he would seem to recommend a general filling up of all the canals in the country; the Columbia Road should be sold to the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, and the clause imposing the three mill tonnage tax should be repealed; it would increase the revenue of the State and greatly promote the interests of the people generally. Notwithstanding the A. P. R. R. was nearly completed, and an unconditional appropriation of \$277,730 had then been made to finish the laying of the rails, the representatives of the people, overcome by such cogent reasoning, and weighty considerations of public policy, passed another bill for the sale of the Main Line, fixing \$7,500,000 as the minimum, and proposing to release the Company from the three mill tonnage tax, if it would consent to take these worthless improvements off their hands at \$5,500,000. The tonnage tax last year amounted to \$136,610, the interest at five per cent. of more than \$2,782,000, and if suffered to remain, in a few years, it would yield \$250,000, or 300,000, the interest of five or six millions at five per cent. But the Legislature, as introductory to the total repeal of this promising source of revenue, without any consideration, at least to the State, and without any benefit to the coal and lumber men, unless they be officers, their partners or dependants, repealed the tax on coal and lumber.

This young monster, emboldened and infuriated by its success, by the facility with which it had managed our Legislature, and by the forbearance of the people; confident of its power to extort still better terms from some wiser Legislative body, again resolved not to bid for these improvements, and to adopt a bolder line of policy, and to make them in fact, what its officers had represented them to be in their pamphlets and subsidized press, utterly worthless. And it proceeded, in pursuance of an arrangement with the forwarding companies, made it is believed last winter, to buy off this Main Line by guaranteeing or giving \$50,000 to one Company and \$50,000 to the other, and have them draw off and sell their boats and cars, leaving it abandoned,—deserted,—worthless to Philadelphia, to Pittsburg, to all the intermediate parts of the State, and to the State itself. For, I presume every body knows, that in consequence of the unavoidable transshipments at Johnstown, Hollidaysburg and Columbia, no through carrying can be done on this Main Line, but by means of through forwarding lines, except the little that may be done in the small section boats.

And though, more than five weeks ago, the Company had its agents travelling all along the line, with the owners of the forwarding lines valuing their stock; and though for more than two weeks, almost every man, woman and child residing along the canals and Railroads between Philadelphia and Pittsburg, have known that the Pennsylvania Railroad Company had bought off the forwarding lines, and that they had for that length of time refused to receive freights, and have for the last two weeks been removing their boats and cars from the Canals and Railroads, forming the line, yet the great Commercial Journal of Philadelphia the "North American and United States Gazette," the organ and guardian of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company, is entirely innocent of any knowledge of these transactions! And, in its leader of the 20th June says that "The fact charged, that the Directors of the Central Road have bought, or are endeavoring to buy the interest of the several transporting firms who have been using the Main Line for the carriage of freight between Philadelphia and Pittsburg. For two or three obvious reasons, it is sincerely to be hoped that the measure has not so much as been contemplated. In the first place, it is highly desirable both as regards the welfare of the Commonwealth and its citizens, that the improvement in question, should be kept in active operation." And it effects to disapprove the measure and to administer some gentle reproof to the Company.

But whilst its affection of ignorance of these infamous movements of the Company are highly amusing, its terror and alarm at the probable consequences likely to ensue from the audacity of the movement, are undesignated and unaffected. And well may the organ and the Company both quail before the storm they have raised. And permit me to say, that the affectation of ignorance, the gentle reproof, and the attempted diversion by the organ, I am inclined to think, will not avail to allay the spirits of the tempest they have evoked. Equally farcical is the affected ignorance of the organ, as exhibited in its leader of the 28th June, respecting the resolution of the Company not to bid for the Main Line. When that resolution was passed, I have not the means of knowing—but I know more than five weeks ago from the President of the Company, through a reliable source, that such a resolution had then been unanimously passed, and had not then been published, because, as he alleged, the report of the Company, kindly setting forth the reasons, as was done in 1854, why the Company should not purchase the Line, and why, of course, other companies and persons who might be foolish enough to think of bidding for these worthless improvements, should not do so either, was not prepared. But that report, I presume will not now figure in the columns of the organ. Having adopted a more effective way of rendering these improvements worthless, and of deterring others from bidding for them; and having caught in the distance some of the first mutterings of the coming storm of popular indignation, I presume it will not be deemed advisable to aggravate its fury by any further experiments on the patience and forbearance of the people. I would recall to the recollection of the "North American" and the Company, the fate of another monster, once located in Chestnut street, which for not one half the corruption and audacity, justly chargeable to this young cub, was by General Jackson and the people trampled in the dust.

In the same leader of the 28th, the organ apparently much alarmed at an article which appeared a day or two before in the New York Courier and Enquirer, urging upon the New York merchants and capitalists the value of these improvements, regarded by the Company and apparently by Philadelphia, as of no importance, and to purchase them, the organ insisted, that if any such resolution

had been passed by the Company, (and of the passage of which every body in Philadelphia had knowledge, except the "N. American") that it should be immediately rescinded, and that the Company should purchase the Main Line. In that article, and in a number of eminently absurd and puerile leaders, published within the last four or five months, the organ has labored with a great show of independence and zeal for the interests of the people, to persuade them that it would be dangerous to trust these improvements in the hands of a rival Company, and that the only safety for the people would be in giving to the Company a monopoly of the immense carrying trade between the East and the West, and in committing their interests, with a generous confidence, to the tender care of this corporation. In this enlightened age, the old notion of competition of competing lines of improvement, or of competing companies of carriers, having any tendency to lessen the cost or increase the amount or facilities of trade and business, is absurd, and should be exploded. The P. R. R. Co. of course would with both lines in its hands, carry more goods, carry them cheaper, and furnish greater facilities to trade than two companies could or would do; and would of course reduce the cost of transportation!! But the "North American" forgot, or perhaps did not know that heretofore, as soon the canal was closed in the fall, this Company added about fifty per cent. to its summer rates of freight, and kept the rates up until the opening of the canal in the spring. Though the great commercial journal of Philadelphia may not know these things, the people do, and have not such an abiding confidence in the tender regard of the Company for their interests as that journal; and they feel that perhaps some competition in this business should be encouraged notwithstanding. And it is surprising what an effect the terror, under which the leader of the 29th was written, produced on the organ. This leader gives some strong indications of returning reason and common sense, and is an interesting commentary on its immediate predecessor. The organ itself begins to suspect competition, may not be such a bad thing after all.

And can it be necessary to say to Philadelphia and Pittsburg, and to the people all along the line, how deeply they are interested in keeping the Main Line out of the hands of the Central Company? Can any merchant or business man any where be found so stupid, at this time of day, as not to know that an unrestricted monopoly of the immense and increasing carrying trade between the east and west, in the hands of the Central Company, or of any company, would be a great public and private evil, and which would not be tolerated for any length of time? Would not such a monopoly be ruinous to the trade of Philadelphia and Pittsburg, and death to all way trade? If I were an enemy of the Central Company, and desired to see it ruined, I could wish for it nothing which in my opinion, would so certainly array an indignant people against it and utterly destroy it, and that very monopoly which it is so anxiously seeking to obtain. But I am no enemy to the Company. I have received no favors and suffered no injuries at its hands. I regard its road as one of the greatest achievements of the day, and an enduring and magnificent monument to the wisdom and energy of Philadelphia. Let no one charge her hereafter with a want of public spirit and enterprise. And I most anxiously desire to see her and the whole country, reap all the advantage from this great improvement, which, it is so well calculated to secure them. But I confess I feel little admiration for its management, and its managers. Nay more, contemplating the haughty and contemptuous disregard it has shown from the beginning, for the private rights and interests of individuals and communities, and its grasping and monopolizing spirit, I have begun to regard it with terror and alarm.

But to return to the subject. It is well known that if the Company do not buy the Line under the present bill, it will not be so much because the price fixed is too high, as because of the provision requiring the purchasers to keep forever the Canals and Railroads open and in order, and to furnish the necessary motive power on the roads. This is the objectionable feature, and which the Company succeeded in keeping out of the bill whilst passing through the House, but which, thanks to some Senators, they were not able to keep out of the bill when it came to the Senate. It is also well known that when that provision, despite the exertions of the Company, its aiders and abettors, was inserted in the Senate, they abandoned the bill as no longer worthy of their consideration; and that its chief officers then announced the determination of the company not to purchase, and then it was, I presume, that the short cut was agreed upon. That provision out of the bill, and I presume there would be little hesitation about buying. The design of the Company

was to discontinue the Western Division, the Portage Road, and the Eastern Division from Hollidaysburg to Huntingdon, if the bill could have been passed without the provision. And this design was not concealed, but openly avowed. Now let Philadelphia and Pittsburg, and all the intermediate country, look at this aspect of the subject, and say what they think of it. Are two independent lines between the East and West too much for them? Is there not trade enough for both now? And will not that trade, with two competing lines attracting it to them, be soon more than both of them can possibly carry? And when New York, with two Railroads connecting her great metropolis with the West, is spending millions to widen and deepen her canal, will Philadelphia and Pittsburg, with one continuous Railroad only, agree to fill up their Canals, and this, too, for the purpose of satiating the voracious maw of this ambitious corporation?

And is this Main Line so worthless as this lying corporation represents it? If so, why this anxiety to destroy it? No, sir, by no means. Examine its statistics and you will find that its tonnage has been increasing every successive year, and increasing, I believe, more rapidly since the Central Road has been built than before, showing the wonderful power of competition to increase trade. And the amount of its tonnage this spring, up to the date of the infamous outrage committed by this insolent and audacious corporation, is greater than it ever was before for the same period, notwithstanding this has been a very unfavorable season for freight.

And in reply to the allegation by the officers of this Company that this line has been a burden on the treasury and yielded no revenue to the State, I would ask them how many Railroads in the United States yield any dividends to the Stockholders, after honestly paying all expenses and repairs. I would suggest to them, or rather to the honest Stockholders of this Company, who are not engaged in the outside speculations to examine the books of this Company, and tell me how much of the current expenses of the road is charged every year to the account of construction, for the purpose of showing deceptive profits; and then tell me what would be the honest amount of its net dividends? and what must be the amount of the net profits of a Company that pays for eighteen to twenty-four per cent. for the loan of money, to pay six per cent. dividends. In reference to the charges of prodigality and corruption in the management of the State Improvements, far be it from me to undertake the hopeless task of refutation. Though I am not one of the initiated, and have never been behind the curtain to see any considerable portion of the iniquities and shortcomings of this young corporation, enough of them have come to my knowledge to warrant me in affirming that for the time it has been in existence, it has been guilty of more prodigality, corruption, and favoritism, than the State officers have ever been for the same period.

And to the honest Stockholders, I would further suggest that they enquire and ascertain how many officers and directors of the Company have been engaged in the Altoona speculation? How many in the Huntingdon speculation? How many in the Greenwith speculation on the Delaware? How many in the coal and lumber speculation? How many in the Allegheny Coal Company speculation? How many in the Westmoreland Coal Company speculation? How much coal they have carried and contracted to carry, and at what prices? Whether the Company can afford to carry the coal of the Westmoreland Company at the rates agreed upon? Whether the officers have not refused to carry coal for others at the same rates or at any rates? Whether other and more valuable freights, at higher rates have not been refused? Whether the repeal of the three mill tax on coal and lumber has been of any benefit to any persons except the officers, their partners and their favorites? Whether the officers do not keep a schedule of rates for the outside barbarians, and make special contracts with their partners, dependants and favorites, at much lower rates? And how much the officers of the Westmoreland Company would make on their contracts for coal this season, by the repeal of the three mill tax? And whether in fine the interests of the Company have not generally been made subservient to the interests of the officers, their partners, dependants, and favorites? And whether their private fortunes have not been much improved by the operation? Other equally pregnant suggestions might be made, but these are deemed sufficient to warrant some investigation and inquiry.

And now I would ask the people of Pennsylvania whether they have any inquiries and investigations to make into the conduct of this Company? Whether they are disposed to pass over in silence its many transgressions, and especially its last audacious outrage? Will they continue to elect men to the Legislature, the majority of whom will be, as the majority

have been heretofore, the corrupt tools of this corrupt Corporation? If so, how long do they suppose it will be till the proud old Keystone State shall have become the humble and submissive vassal of this dominating Corporation? Till she shall have fallen to that depth of degradation to which New Jersey has already sunk, as the vassal of the Camden and Amboy Railroad Company? And if this half-grown cub is now so audacious and daring what will it be when it shall have reached its full growth, and especially when it shall have destroyed all competition, and become the owner of the Main Line? All competition and checks destroyed, with the immense additional power and patronage of the Main Line, what will not this thing huge monster dare and do? If these things take place in the green tree, what may we expect in the dry? A PENNSYLVANIAN.

Kidnapping a White Girl.

On Friday last, at an early hour in the morning, a white girl, 14 years of age, the daughter of Mr. Samuel Goodshall, residing within three miles of Downingtown, Chester county, was carried away by two men in a close carriage, a distance of twelve miles from home, toward the Maryland line. The girl had been with a neighbor for the past two or three weeks, taking care of a sick child, and on the morning of Friday, while going along the road to drive a cow from the pasture field, she was accosted by two strange men, very genteely dressed, who were standing near a carriage, attached to which were two horses. They asked her name, and where she lived, to which inquiries she gave answers without hesitation, supposing that they were friends or acquaintances of a gentleman residing in the neighborhood. Without any further conversation one of them opened a tin box, and took therefrom what appeared to be a pitch plaster, which he instantly clapped over her mouth, when both of them dragged her into the carriage and drove off.

They passed, by an indirect route from the place, through Coatsville, some three miles beyond the latter place, and about twelve miles from her home. Here they let her out upon the road, in a secluded and wooded portion of the country, threatening to kill her if she made any alarm, when they drove away as fast as they could. The poor girl, faint and sick from mental excitement and terror, scarcely knew where she was or what to do, when she was met by two colored persons, who assisted her in taking the plaster from her mouth, advised her as to her course homeward. The girl succeeded in getting to her home a little before sunset, having been all day absent. She states that the fellows offered her no insult or personal violence, except that occasionally when her sobs and efforts to cry prevailed, they threatened to knock her brains out with the whip.

The solution to this outrage is that the men mistook her for a mulatto, and designed taking her into the State of Maryland. Ascertaining, however, while on the route, that they had made prisoner of a sun-burnt white girl, they concluded to make the best of an error by giving her leave to find her way home, and they to get out of Chester county as quickly as possible.—Philadelphia Ledger, July 9.

Barnum's Last.

A correspondent of the Philadelphia Ledger, writing from New York, gives the following as Barnum's last. He says: "An eminent publishing house in Paris is engaged in issuing a series of the most distinguished female beauties in the world, which, when completed, is to include ten of the handsomest ladies in the United States, and these Barnum has undertaken to engage.

In order to stimulate competition, he offers \$5000, in premiums, ranging from \$1000 down to \$150, to be distributed, according to the different degrees of beauty. Ladies accordingly are requested to send in their daguerotypes to the Museum. None will be received later than the 15th of October.

The judge of the "best looking are to be the people at large." Each visitor is to mark on a slip of paper the particular number, corresponding with that of his choice, and deposit it in a ballot box at the door. The result is to be announced on the 16th of September.

Single and married women alike may compete, but none below "sweet sixteen" are to enter the lists. No limit to ancient maidenhood is specified. When the show in public is over, artists are to be employed to paint full sized portraits of the premium beauties. Great, great is the hubbub, and Barnum is its profit. A down-cast skipper, with a boy, was trying to manage a small sloop, when the master of a Liverpool packet, who had been dodging out of their way, increased at their awkwardness, cried out— "What sloop is that?" "The Sally, from Maine," responded the Yankee. "Who commands her?" "Well, replied the skipper, "I undertake to, but I swear, she's too much for me!"