

HUNTINGDON JOURNAL.

"ONE COUNTRY, ONE CONSTITUTION, ONE DESTINY."

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TERMS

HUNTINGDON JOURNAL.

The "Journal" will be published every Wednesday morning, at two dollars a year if paid IN ADVANCE, and if not paid within six months, two dollars and a half. Every person who obtains five subscribers and forwards price of subscription, shall be furnished with a sixth copy gratuitously for one year.

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MESSAGE.

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

GENTLEMEN:—The money in the Treasury of the Commonwealth being inadequate to discharge the demands upon it, now due, and that will become due on the 1st February next, I conceive it to be my imperative duty, to call the immediate attention of the Legislature to this subject. It is most superfluous to remark, that the credit, the faith, and honor of the State, will all be deeply affected, unless, by the prompt act of the Legislature, this deficiency should be supplied.

It would be an everlasting stigma upon the fair fame of Pennsylvania, if, with her vast resources & her abundant means to perform her engagements, she should permit her creditors, for a single hour, to knock at the door of an empty Treasury.

Every consideration of duty and of policy, requires at the hands of the Legislature and the Executive, the most unflinching fidelity to the public engagements. Nothing is gained by postponing the time of action, for it must eventually arrive. The policy is as unwise as the spirit is of unworthy statesmen, to surrender to our successors the performance of duties that justly devolve on ourselves.

I will proceed to lay before you the financial condition of the Commonwealth so far as it appears to me to be connected with your deliberation on the subject; premising, that I have derived most of my fiscal information from those official documents which are already before you, and which are presumed to furnish accurate statements of the several matters to which they respectively relate. I have so recently entered upon the discharge of the duties of the office, conferred upon me by the people, that I do not pretend to possess the familiar practical knowledge of the financial concerns of the Commonwealth, that can only be acquired by an active official participation in all their detailed operations. I have, however, devoted to the subject, that careful and scrupulous attention due alike to its importance, and to the just expectation of the Legislature that no Executive communication will be submitted to it, in the accuracy of which, implicit confidence may not be reposed.

In order to present a full and satisfactory view of the finances of the Commonwealth, I will lay before you, in the first place, the entire amount of the public debt, composed of permanent, temporary, and conditional loans, together with the estimated value of the public property consisting of stocks, canals, rail roads; &c., viz:

Debts contracted for public improvements by canals and rail roads,	\$22,229,003 32
Loans not relating to canals and rail roads,	1,680,000 0
Loans for Eastern Penitentiary, by act of 21st March 1831,	120,800 00
Loan to Union Canal Company, by act of 1st March, 1835,	200,000 00
Temporary loan by act of 16th June 1836,	200,000 00
Temporary loan by act of 14th April, 1838,	800,000 00
Debts due on appropriations to miscellaneous objects,	1,545,729 86
Debts due by appropriations to internal improvements,	538,057 01
Debt due U. States, on account of conditional loan of surplus revenue,	78,867,514 78
Amount of public debt,	\$30,174,304 97

PUBLIC PROPERTY.

The public works, canals, rail roads, &c., \$25,109,644 92

Bank stock,	2,108,700 00
Turnpike & bridge stock,	2,786,396 58
Canal & navigation stock,	528,000 00
Rail road stock,	179,564 59
Money due on unpatented lands,	1,000,000 00
Estimated value of public property,	\$81,652,306 09

It is right to remark in respect to this statement, that I have not entered upon the debt side an item of \$230,000, a sum borrowed from the bank of the U. States, and an item of \$50,000, borrowed from the Harrisburg Bank, by my predecessor, under circumstances explained in his message, on the assumption of which the Legislature has not yet acted. And in regard to the estimated value of the public works, canals, rail roads &c., it is doubted very much whether her actual value is not far greater than here represented.—The estimate refers more directly to their cost than to their present value. It is possible that some additional liabilities of the State might arise, if the Legislature should think proper, for the public good, to div. st any corporations created by authority of this Commonwealth, of the privileges granted by law, in consideration of which they have paid bonuses into the public Treasury. This, however, must be regarded as a remote contingency. Of the forgoing public debt, the amount of \$5,945,201 65 has been contracted within the last three years, exclusive of the items above referred to, and not charged.

It is manifest, from this view of the entire amount of the debts and resources of the Commonwealth, that her means are ample for all emergencies, although a portion of the public property may not be immediately available.

The principle purpose of this message is however, to call your attention to the present condition of the finances, as exhibited by the following statement of monies now due, or becoming due, on the 1st February next, and immediately thereafter, viz:

Stock loan per act of 30th March, 1824, payable 1st January, 1839	\$220,000 00
Interest on permanent & temporary loans	602,220 00
For ordinary repairs on public improvements	400,000 00
Balance due of appropriations per act of 15th April, 1838	242,864 23
To which perhaps, may be added the sum borrowed for repairs of canal on Juniata Division	380,000 00
	\$1,845,114 23

The Legislature will also be required at its present session to make provision to pay the following loans and demands on the Treasury, due at the times specified

Stock loan, per act 30th March, 1824, due 1st May next	380,000 00
Stock loan, per act 7th December, 1829, and 4th January, 1831, due 1st May next	90,000 00
Stock loan, per act 11th April, 1825, due 1st Jan. 1840	150,000 00
Temporary loan, per act 16th June, 1836, due in June, 1839	200,000 00
Temporary loan, per act 14th April, 1838, due at various times, from 15th June to 31st Oct. 1839	600,000 00
Temporary loan, per 3d section act 14th April, 1838, due before 1st Jan. 1840	200,000 00
Interest on loans due on or before 1st August, 1839	618,260 00
Salaries of toll collectors &c., remainder of year	50,000 00
Due for repairs	77,080 97
Expenses of motive power for other expenditures (including education,)	283,565 82
	1,129,927 14
Deduct amount of estimate receipts for remaining part of year	55,573,036 16
	1,644,918 82
Total deficit for 1839	\$3,928,117 34

It will be perceived, that the permanent and temporary loans falling due at the times mentioned in this statement, constitute a part of the State debt already adverted to, and by providing for their payment the aggregate amount is not increased.

I have included the necessary appropriations for ordinary repairs, among the demands to be provided for on the 1st February, because it is a fund that should be at all times in readiness, and a great portion of it will be needed as soon as the business on the improvements commences in the spring. Provision must also be made for the loan falling due on the 1st of January, 1840, by the Legislature at its present session, as by the amended Constitution the meeting of the next Legislature is postponed beyond the day of payment.

I will also state on this subject that at the solicitation of a number of gentlemen deeply interested in the transporting business on our public improvements, I was induced a short time ago to make a personal examination of the portion of the canal and slack water navigation recently repaired in Huntingdon county, and am satisfied that its safety, permanency and usefulness, all depend on receiving the speedy and thorough attention of the Canal Commissioners. Unless the new works be repaired, and in some places reconstructed before the spring freshets, there is imminent danger that a considerable portion of them will be swept away.

The estimated receipts into the treasury during the present year, with the exception of two items, amounting to \$225,000 are composed of the ordinary revenues of the State alone. It is rendered certain that the fourth instalment of the surplus revenue from the general Government will not be received, nor will there be bar bonuses, or any other of those accidental and extraordinary means of replenishing the treasury, to depend upon, which have poured into it about \$7,000,000, during the last three years. The State must rely henceforth on her fixed and certain, but gradually increasing ordinary revenues, unless loans or taxation be deemed advisable, to discharge all her liabilities and to compel all her contemplated improvements. To do this successfully, rigid but enlightened economy should be consulted in all her expenditures, and those habits of lavish and illjudged appropriations, engendered by the sudden and unexpected acquisition of public money, through means which can seldom if ever gain happen, must be promptly corrected. It is frequently observed in the case of private individuals, that the sudden acquisition of wealth is fatally injurious to the prudent habits and sound morals of the possessor. It is more emphatically true in the case of government—corruption creeps in unperceived, through a thousand channels, and eats out the substance of the people before they are aware of its stealthy approach.

Habits of improvident profusion grow fashionable, which are difficult to eradicate and those who recommend that they should be restrained in the slightest degree, are stigmatized as parsimonious and illiberal. At the hazard even of incurring this reproach, I would earnestly invoke your undivided attention to this branch of our public policy. The enormous and unprecedented deficit in the treasury, now to be supplied, is an instructive commentary on its practical results. If the same policy that has brought us into this condition is persisted in, it must effectually paralyze the energies of this great State. The public debts must be swelled to an inordinate amount, or the prosecution of our valuable system of public improvements must be suspended. You have already a balance to raise more than \$3,000,000 before you can make any appropriations whatever to the completion or extension of any of the unfinished public improvements in which the State has already so much unproductive money invested.

The question is then submitted entirely to your consideration, to determine what appropriations to new works shall be made at the present session. My predecessor recommends in his annual message, the appropriation of at least the following sums to the following named works, viz:

To the Erie extension	\$500,000 00
North Branch canal	500,000 00
Gettysburg rail road	300,000 00
West Branch canal	200,000 00
Wisconsin canal	100,000 00
Allegheny feeder	100,000 00

The Canal Commissioners in their report, recommend the appropriation of the following sums to the works designated, viz:

To the Erie extension	\$1,200,000 00
North branch	1,200,000 00
Gettysburg rail road	600,000 00
Sinnemahoning extension	500,000 00
Allegheny feeder	500,000 00
Wisconsin canal	286,000 00
	\$3,786,000 00

And they recommend also, that the further sum of \$1,253,467 77 should be appropriated for the "current year, as necessary for the permanent repair and prosperity of the improvements." I beg leave to refer you to the message and report for the explanatory information accompanying these several recommendations. I am not aware of having in my power, any communication to make that would materially aid your deliberations on this head, except to suggest the propriety and necessity of providing, by some judicious prospective legislation, not only for the payment of the appropriations that are made at the present session, but for the mode of obtaining money hereafter, when needful, to continue and complete the works to which such appropriations are applied. The sums appropriated, have usually been exhausted before the next meeting of the Legislature, and those engaged in the construction of our public works, have been compelled to make sacrifices to enable them to prosecute their labors, or to dismiss their workmen, until funds be provided by law. Many months elapse before legislative action can be had on the subject, and before the negotiation of the necessary loan, when authorized, the work is frequently abandoned by the contractor, or his workmen have sought employment elsewhere, and by the time the requisite funds are obtained, operations are to be commenced anew; and thus it may be fairly assumed, that our public improvements have cost perhaps thirty per cent more than they would have done, if timely provision to continue their prosecution had been made. If the contractor knew beforehand, what amount of money he might rely upon as forthcoming when wanted, he could make arrangements accordingly, to his own and the public advantage. The work would progress with greater facility, and of consequence enable contractors to do it cheaper and more expeditiously, than heretofore. The public faith would at all times be regarded as sacred, and the contractors, (a class of men who have certainly had some cause to complain,) would be essentially benefited by the adoption of this policy, and also the numerous laborers and artisans, by whose invaluable services our great improvements have been constructed, would be in a good degree secured from the suffering and destitution too often inflicted upon them by the failures of the contractors on our public works.

In order to remedy this state of things in future, I beg leave to recommend to the Legislature the enactment of a law authorizing the Governor, with the sanction of the Commissioners of the internal improvement fund and Canal Commissioners, or under such other checks as may be deemed advisable, to borrow such sums of money as may be found necessary to carry on the several lines of improvements until the meeting of the next Legislature, whenever the appropriations to the same may happen to become exhausted. Requiring of course, that the money so obtained be placed in the treasury of the Commonwealth, disbursed and accounted for in the manner provided by law.

It would be expedient that the sum which might be so obtained, should be limited to a reasonable amount, and that the rate of interest and terms of the loan, should be strictly defined. It seems to me that the adoption of any other principles of action in relation to the prosecution of our system of internal improvements, cannot be prudent and salutary. The measures themselves must fluctuate often, the works progress tardily, and the expense of their construction be much increased. Nor can I omit suggesting further to you the obviously sound policy of looking in your legislative action to the speedy completion of the main lines of improvement between the eastern and western extremities of the Commonwealth, the Erie extension to the lake, and the North Branch canal, leading into the flourishing western counties of the State of New York. The instant these works are finished, the trade upon them must be augmented in a manifold degree. The state has already large sums invested in them, from which she will realize no returns of consequence till they are finished. Other works of undoubted utility, leading directly into these principal highways to market, will next deserve attention; but in what respect the Gettysburg rail road claims to rank in the first, or even in the second of these classes, is more than I can discover. It is well worth the serious consideration of the Legislature, whether in the present embarrassed condition of the finances of the State, that work ought not be abandoned, till some more auspicious season for resuming it arrives. On no part of our system of improvements has public opinion been more emphatically pronounced. If completed, its advantage to Pennsylvania is questionable, if indeed it be not absolute useless—the commencement was judicious—the cost of its construction is enormous, and, should it be abandoned,

the only disadvantage will be the loss of a very large sum of money now irretrievably consumed by it, which will be vastly increased if the state perseveres in the prosecution of the work. I respectfully submit this subject to the candor and good sense of the legislature, believing that its further prosecution at present is not warranted by either prudence or patriotism.

Being decidedly in favor myself of a judicious and comprehensive system of public improvements, reaching all practicable points, and accommodating all sections of the Commonwealth alike, I should be happy to co-operate with the Legislature in completing it at the earliest possible day, and would rejoice to become instrumental in carrying such system into speedy operation; but, finding the Treasury in a situation that seems to forbid all hope of engaging in that undertaking until our fiscal concerns are restored to a sound and healthy state, I respectfully suggest to the Legislature the expediency of applying the funds of the Commonwealth, at the present time, to any other works than the main lines and their immediate tributaries.

It cannot be long before the increasing ordinary revenue arising from the tolls of the canals and rail roads of the Commonwealth, will defray all the expenses necessary to keep them in repair and pay the interest of the money expended in their construction. Then will the state, for all particular purposes, be free from debt and be fully able to undertake without fear of embarrassment, the extension and completion of her noble improvement system until it touches every county within her extensive limits and returns to their citizens the entire sum of their contributions, to the system in its commencement and progressive advance towards their own homes. I cannot close this brief reference to our system of public improvements without inviting the attention of the legislature to two subjects, which though not immediately connected with the leading object of this communication are yet so essentially necessary to the full fruition of the benefits to be derived from our main lines of canals and rail roads between the eastern and western sections of the Commonwealth, as to awaken the earnest solicitude of every true Pennsylvanian. I allude to the removal of the obstructions to steamboat navigation in the Allegheny, Ohio and Mississippi rivers from Pittsburg to the Gulf of Mexico, and from Pittsburg up the Allegheny as far as the same may be found practicable by the survey authorized under discretion of the General Government and to the construction of a continuous rail road from the city of Pittsburg through or near the Capitols of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois, to some point on the Mississippi river at or near St. Louis.

By the completion of these important undertakings, a great amount of business would be at once thrown upon our improvements. The merchandise of various kinds from the eastern States, and the agricultural and mineral productions of the rich and flourishing southern and western states, that would pass through Pennsylvania, must be far beyond any present computation. The rapidly increasing trade of the lakes too, which is fast stripping the hopes of this most sanguine, would descend the Allegheny river and contribute largely to swell the business of our canals and rail roads. The tolls on our main lines would be so much increased as to amply sustain the less profitable portions of our system, without rendering it necessary to make the slightest addition to the State debt, or to any of the burdens imposed on the people. The trade of the growing and prosperous cities of Philadelphia and Pittsburg would be immensely multiplied, and the southern and western states themselves, now feeling the want of such mediums of communication to an unparalleled extent, would receive an impulse of no ordinary influence upon their posterity and greatness. A glance at the map of the Union, will convince every man of the importance of these improvements to Pennsylvania as well as to the vast regions of country of unsurpassed fertility and mineral wealth, which would find the canals and rail roads of this state their direct highways to market. In order to carry into effect the views herein expressed, I respectfully recommend the propriety of adopting the proper steps to enlist the General Government in the project of clearing out the obstructions to the navigation of the Ohio and Mississippi rivers by steamboats from Pittsburg, which is a port of entry, to the Gulf of Mexico; and also from Pittsburg up the Allegheny to such point as may be fixed in the survey, authorized by act of Congress, as the termination of steamboat navigation. The prosecution of such works as these, by the National Government, falls directly and properly within its legitimate power, according to the strictest interpretation of the constitution.

And I would also recommend the adoption of measures, either by appointing a committee of the Legislature or by such other efficient mode as may be thought expedient to secure the joint and united action of the several states interested in the project of constructing a continuous rail-road communication between Pittsburg and St. Louis. This may be effected by a joint incorporation of a company, or of several companies, with authority for the purpose, or by the states through which the road would pass, undertaking it themselves upon terms mutually assented to by all. It would afford me pleasure to transmit to the legislatures of these states such resolutions or information as will tend to bring about this desirable result. It may not be amiss to add that the bold and sagacious policy of our southern and northern neighbors, to secure the trade of the South and West, is well calculated to admonish Pennsylvania to be on the alert. When the countless advantages, to which I have barely alluded, may be firmly and securely grasped without the slightest expense or inconvenience to the people, let them not be surrendered by legislative procrastination. The day for action has already arrived.

In reference to the mode of obtaining funds to supply the present wants of the Treasury, I am in possession of no further information than is already before you, in the report of the State Treasurer and in the message of my predecessor. No other alternative seems to be presented, than taxation or loans;—of the two, the latter appears least objectionable, because productive of least hardship to the people, is less expensive, and can be carried into effect with greater facility. That the credit and resources of the State are ample to extricate her, in the present crisis, from embarrassment, is a fact which no intelligent citizen can doubt. It is in no spirit of self-sufficiency or empty gratulation, that every citizen of Pennsylvania justly looks upon this Commonwealth as second to none of the sister States, in the industry, frugality, and integrity of her citizens—in the extent, quality, and the accessibility of the boundless resources which nature has scattered throughout her borders with a prodigal hand—in her coal fields, her iron ore, her agricultural productions—and in her stupendous system of internal improvements, connecting together her remotest extremities, unlocking her richest resources, and marked, in its conception, by the comprehensive reach of mind which entitles its projectors and founders to rank with the first statesmen of the age. The credit of Pennsylvania, resting on this foundation, can be shaken by no convulsion that does not overturn the Government itself, and dissolve society into its original elements. Pecuniary embarrassments, it is true, may arise from ill-judged measures, extravagant expenditures, or short-sighted policy; but they must, of necessity, be of temporary duration. Time soon detects fallacies, exposes errors, regulates derangements, and corrects misgovernment. One failure to comply with her engagements, on the part of the State, becomes the parent of future precautions against like occurrences, and serves but to show the faithful fidelity of the people to their obligations, because it is stamped with the seal of universal condemnation or regret.

It is with no ordinary feelings of state pride and satisfaction, that I express my firm confidence in the abundant means now possessed by the Commonwealth, to pay her public debt by the sale of the public improvements, in the construction of which that debt was mainly contracted, if such measure was deemed necessary or wise; and also my conviction equally firm and gratifying, in the increase of her means to meet all future liabilities, created by the entire completion of the system of improvements, in the achievement of this great undertaking, we follow the dictates of prudence and experience. Nothing but the improvident or corrupt mismanagement of her rulers, can mar the bright prospect that is opening on the destinies of Pennsylvania.

Having recently passed through a period of unexampled excitement and agitation, the people of this great Commonwealth are anxious for repose. Social commotions, produced by political, pecuniary, or any other causes, are destructive to the best interests and substantial welfare of the community. They cripple business of all kinds, retard public improvements, deprive the laboring portion of our fellow-citizens of their means of support, and tend directly to unsettle the foundation of our republican institutions. Let us hope that this condition of things is at an end—that, henceforth, a spirit of undeviating regard for the public weal, and of unwavering respect for the laws of the State, may be cherished, both by her rulers and by her people. Public opinion, the unfailing corrective of all abuses in a free Government, calls loudly on every department of ours, to direct their