

# Huntingdon Journal

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## Remarks of Mr. Henry K. Strong, of Philadelphia City,

Delivered in the House of Representatives of Pennsylvania, April 5th, 1853, on reading a Bill in place, to incorporate a Company to purchase the Main Line of Public Works for \$15,000,000.

In presenting this bill to the House, I may be permitted to say, that I have done so after a full consultation with members from different sections of the State, representing both political parties upon this floor. All have acknowledged, that the public finances of Pennsylvania, the great interests of trade and commerce, and the purity of our institutions, demand a speedy divorce of the Government, from the management of the public works.

The bill here presented is for the incorporation of a company, to purchase, for \$15,000,000 the Main Line of canals and railroads, from Philadelphia to Pittsburg. It authorizes the Governor, upon the subscription of the whole stock, and the payment of \$3,000,000 in cash, or the bonds of the Commonwealth at par, and execution thereon, one bond payable each year until the whole amount is paid; to convey to the company, the whole Main Line, from Pittsburg to the city of Philadelphia, together with all the property, real, personal and mixed, belonging to the same. The bill does not stop here. In order to give more value to the State property, and insure a sale, a section is added, authorizing the company to extend the Philadelphia and Columbia railroad to the Allegheny mountain, and connect with the Portage, and to extend the Allegheny Portage railroad to the city of Pittsburg thus rendering it one of the most efficient competitors for the trade of the West, that can be constructed.

By the report of the Auditor General and State Treasurer, laid before the Senate at the last session, the cost of the Main Line is stated to be as follows:

Phila. and Columbia Railroad	\$4,791,548 91
Eastern Division of the Canal	1,737,236 97
Junata Division of the Canal	3,570,016 29
Allegheny Portage Railroad	1,860,752 76
Western Division of Canal	3,096,522 30

Total cost of the Main Line \$15,056,077 23  
To this may be added \$575,000, appropriated by the Legislature to avoid the inclined planes on the Allegheny Portage Railroad, and which if this bill does not pass, will require more than one million of dollars more.

I believe it is now generally admitted that while this great avenue of trade between the waters of the Ohio and the Atlantic, in the hands of an enterprising company, may be exceedingly profitable, yet under State management, the experiment is a signal failure involving the Commonwealth in increasing debt, and affording only a *infernal* for all the broken down politicians in Pennsylvania.

In the Canal Commissioners report, it is pretended, that the revenue of the Main Line, for the year 1852, was \$485,571 08 over all expenditure! It is there attempted to be shown, that the receipts over expenditures for motive power, supervision and repairs were on the

Phila. and Columbia Railroad	\$480,407 55
Main Line of Canals	101,227 23
Portage Railroad less	\$581,634 29
	96,983 20

pretended net revenue of Main Line \$485,571 08

That this pretended net revenue of the Main Line, is entirely fallacious, I call the attention of the House to the following debts due, and expenditures made, not taken into the calculation, but found in the Canal Commissioners report, page 30.

The amount of debts not yet brought to light, can not now be estimated. Every years brings old debts up for payment.

Debts due for repairs during the year 1852, on the Phila. and Columbia Railroad	\$ 5,369 71
Debts due for repairs during fiscal year 1851, on the Allegheny Portage Railroad	50,329 71
Debts due for repairs, for 1852, on the Main Line of canal	36,238 58
Motive power debts on the railroads for fiscal year 1852, unpaid	78,242 81
Old debts for repairs unpaid	32,889 83
Old motive power debts unpaid	15,756 71
Debts due for repairing road and farm bridges	15,000 00

Debts acknowledged due & unpaid, To this sum add expenditures on the 30th page of the Auditor Genl's Report, for fiscal year 1852—30.

Motive power and Locomotives	483,465 01
Motive for night trains	18,000 00
Repairs, &c.	493,050 03
Stratifying and improving Phila. and Columbia Railroad	218,390 13
Rebuilding Conestoga bridge	1,223 30
Clark's ferry bridge	50 00
Salaries of Collectors, Lock-keepers and weigh-masters	103,367 38
Canal Commissioners	5,428 00

Deduct repairs and salaries for lock-tenders, collectors, weigh-masters and incidental expenses, on Delaware Division, Susquehanna, W. Branch, and North Branch Divisions, as by Canal Commissioners' Report, page 8.

Actual expenses of the Main Line as far as known	1,433,282 23
Deduct receipts, as by Canal Commissioners' Report, page 6 and 7,	

Allegheny P. R. R.	311,188 82
Main line of Canal	310,816 26
	1,391,649 44

Actual LOSS to the State on the Main line, \$39,639 71

Thus it will be seen that instead of a net revenue of \$485,571 08 in 1852 there has been an actual loss, as exhibited by the reports of the Canal Commissioners and Auditor General, of 39,639 dollars and 71 cents! To this amount every member of this House may estimate and add for himself the old debts yet to be dug up from oblivion, and the damages paid for the destruction of goods and other property occasioned by the carelessness of State agents.

To show, if possible, more conclusively, that little or no revenue is anticipated for the coming year, I refer you to the 37th, 28th and 29th pages of the report of the Canal Commissioners, and you will perceive that while the whole receipts of the Main Line for 1852 were only 1,391,649 dollars and 44 cents, the estimated sum needed for repairs, motive power, and salaries for this same work is 1,262,649 dollars and 93 cents for the present year. I ask them, is it not time to end this state of things—to put a stop to this drain upon the treasury, and to lay the foundation for the extinguishment of the Public Debt.

This can be done by the passage of the bill which I have just read in my place. The stock, I have no doubt, will be taken, and that the work in the hands of an enterprising company, will become a mighty avenue for travel and internal commerce and be profitable to the stockholders is indisputable. There is one article of domestic produce alone, which by State management is nearly, or quite, excluded from the Line, which now yields more than one-third of the revenue of the Grand Erie Canal of New York. I mean the article of Western flour. Pittsburg, by her position, at the confluence of the Monongahela and Allegheny—at the head of steamboat navigation in the great Ohio valley—by being a radiating point for railroads in every direction—by being situated upon a parallel of latitude running West through the centre to the Rocky Mountains, of the great wheat growing region of the continent, ought to be; and may be made the great depot for flour, seeking an eastern market. Wheat is not raised to any great extent in the counties on the Lake shore, but in the interior of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois, and can as easily be brought to Pittsburg as to Cleveland, Sandusky and Toledo. Why then is it not brought there? Because State management has not only excluded it from the Main Line, but driven Western Pennsylvania flour to the lakes, there to be shipped to Buffalo, and from thence to be carried over the Erie Canal to the Hudson.

The whole amount of flour, in 1852, sent east from Pittsburg, over our main line was only 230,169 barrels, and the wheat was only 9,839 bushels, and this was wholly or mostly Pennsylvania flour and wheat while a much larger quantity went west from our western counties to the lakes. The State revenue, from the flour of other States was nothing. The distance from Cleveland, the nearest lake port of Ohio to New York is more than five hundred miles. The distance from Pittsburg to Philadelphia is about one hundred and thirty miles less. But notwithstanding this, New York gets the Western flour, and Philadelphia does not even receive the Pennsylvania flour. There was carried over the Erie canal in 1852, Western flour to the vast amount of 4,837,893 barrels! yielding a revenue at 23 cents a barrel to the State of New York one million one hundred and twelve thousand seven hundred and fifteen dollars! which is an interest of six per cent on more than EIGHTEEN MILLIONS AND A HALF OF DOLLARS. To secure the great flour trade of the West now in its infancy, will render Philadelphia the great grain mart of the country, and build up and maintain a foreign commerce.

The whole funded debt of Pennsylvania, according to the report of the Auditor General, on the first day of December, '52, was \$40,769,805 71, of which \$20,768,307 34 was incurred in the construction of canals and railroads, now in use, and owned by the Commonwealth.

After the sale of the main line, the State will still own the following profitable canals, the management of which by the State, is far less objectionable than that of railroads, with their complicated machinery and patronage. The length, cost, and revenue of which was in 1852, as follows:

Canals.	M.	Cost.	Net Revenue in 1852.
D. Division	60	\$1,384,606 96	\$214,666 92
N. B. in sec.	71	1,598,379 33	122,655 25
N. B. unfinished	94	1,388,265 90	
Susq. Division	34	897,160 52	
W. B. Div.	81	1,832,083 28	62,758 00
Total	340	\$7,991,495 61	\$400,080 17

During the last year the revenue from Anthracite coal, carried upon the Delaware Division, amounted to 14 1/2 per cent on the original cost of construction, and upon the 71 miles of the North Branch canals, and the toll upon them

was more than sufficient to keep the canal in repair. The completion this year of the whole line, and a connexion with the New York canals, will open an entire water communication, by canal, from the great lakes to the city of Philadelphia, through New York and Pennsylvania, and create an immense new trade, not now existing between these great States.—Pennsylvania supplying Western New York, and the Lakes with Anthracite coal, and New York supplying Pennsylvania with Salt and Gypsum. This trade, it is confidently predicted, will before five years, add annually \$500,000 to our revenue. In addition to this, the tax upon real and personal estate, will constantly increase with the extension of internal commerce, and the increase of population and wealth if no unwise restrictions are permitted to paralyze the growing trade of the Commonwealth.

We may therefore confidently predict, that if this main line is sold to a company, for the sum proposed by this bill, that there will annually remain over the expenses of the Government and the payment of all calls upon the Treasury, the sum of at least \$1,500,000 to be put into a sinking fund for the extinguishment of the public debt. That this may be done, I call the attention of the House to the following items of revenue in 1852, and will take this as the maximum for twelve years to come:

REVENUE.	
Tax on corporation stocks	\$210,542 30
Tax on Bank dividends	146,960 07
Retailers' Licenses	109,268 67
Tavern Licenses	100,120 11
Auction Duties and Commissions	75,635 76
Tax on holders of loans	118,444 16
Collateral Inheritance Tax	143,141 65
Premiums on Charters and Right of Way	73,408 66
Tax on certain offices and enrollment of laws	13,911 65
Tax on Writs, Wills, Deeds, &c.	56,671 71
Purchase money and fees in the Land Office	40,293 41
Tax on Brokers, Sellers, &c. about	56,201 97
Tax on real and personal estate	1,359,636 30
Net revenue in 1852 on canals un-sold: Delaware Division, North Branch, West Branch & Susquehanna canals	400,080 17
Total	\$2,904,248 59
Increased revenue on the canals, and tax on real and personal estate, at least	447,519 16
Annual revenue	\$3,351,767 75

It is not doubted that the sure increase of the coal trade and other causes will swell the annual revenue to a much larger sum. But I will assume the annual revenue to \$3,351,767 75, and then deduct the expenses of the Government, and it will be seen that \$1,500,000 will remain for the extinguishment of the State debt, without any increase of taxation, or a resort to any other source of revenue. In 1852, the following were the expenses

OF STATE GOVERNMENT.	
Senate	\$32,340 50
House of Representatives	70,933 55
Public Printing	25,219 79
Executive Department	12,868 03
Auditor General's Office	8,180 68
Treasurer's Office	6,635 60
Surveyor General's Office	8,951 12
Judiciary	92,183 44
Pensions and Gratitudes	12,885 21
Charitable Institutions	7,763 33
State Agricultural Society	2,000 00
Common Schools	165,109 63
Penitentiary Division	43,332 50
Miscellaneous, say	5,194 18
Total expenses	\$663,277 47
Interest of \$25,769,805 71, at 5 per cent.	1,288,496 28

Total amount required to pay expenses of the Government and interest on the public debt after the sale of the Main line, \$1,551,767 75

If then we deduct the amount necessary to meet the demands upon the Treasury from the annual revenue, it will be seen that *One Million and a half of dollars annually, is left to put into the sinking fund.*

Annual revenue, \$3,351,767 75  
Annual payments, 1,851,767 75  
Annual sinking fund, \$1,500,000 00

In making this calculation, I have, for convenience, assumed that \$3,351,767 75, will be the annual average revenue for 12 years to come. It is believed it will be much greater. The completion of the N. Branch canal, the increase of trade upon the canals, consequent upon the development of the resources of this great mineral Commonwealth, and the augmentation of the receipts for taxes upon every succeeding year, will considerably exceed \$1,500,000. But I will assume this to be the annual sum, and it will be perceived that if the company is organized on the 1st day of January, 1854, that in twelve years from that time, the whole public debt of Pennsylvania will be extinguished, and the great productive canal will still be the property of the State. If this legislature now incorporates a company to carry out this great measure, the abundance of capital now seeking investment will insure a sale for the sum named in the bill which I have just presented to the House, and it deserves and will receive the gratitude of the taxpayers of this Commonwealth.

The following table will show the amount of State indebtedness, at the periods indicated, and the annual payments and interest at 5 per cent. each year, carried to the sinking fund.

Years.	Public Debt.	Payments into Sinking Fund.
1853	\$40,769,805 71	\$15,000,000 00
1854	25,769,805 71	1,500,000 00
1855	24,269,805 71	1,575,000 00
1856	22,694,806 71	1,653,750 00
1857	21,041,650 71	1,736,437 55
1858	19,304,613 16	1,823,259 62
1859	17,481,353 54	1,914,422 35
1860	15,561,931 19	2,010,393 47
1861	13,551,337 72	2,110,913 14
1862	11,440,624 78	2,216,438 80
1863	9,224,165 98	2,327,291 72
1864	6,898,884 26	2,443,645 83
1865	4,453,238 59	2,565,828 07
1866	1,987,410 56	2,694,119 46

Thus it will be seen that by the sale of the Main Line of Public Works, for the sum indicated in the bill, and the gradual operation of the Sinking Fund, in twelve years from the sale, without any increase of revenue beyond that now received, which augmentation no man can doubt, the **WHOLE PUBLIC DEBT OF PENNSYLVANIA WILL BE EXTINGUISHED**, and the sum of \$706,709,90 remain in the Treasury.

Having shown the financial operations of the bill which I have presented to the House, I will now undertake to point out some of the advantages which the great interests of trade and commerce will derive from the measure.

In the first place, the State being relieved from the fear of rivalry from other competing lines, will throw the door wide open to private enterprise, and ever invite it to enter the field of competition for the growing trade of the mighty West. We shall have two great lines running parallel through the centre of Pennsylvania, each striving by cheapness of transit, celerity, and superior accommodations to win the favor of the public, and secure their portion of the trade and travel that passes from the valley of the Mississippi to the shores of the Atlantic Ocean. Every emigrant that now passes to the West, every new farm opened upon the prairies, and every house built beyond the mountains increases that trade, by creating wants in the West which must be supplied in the East. The time is at hand when all the great lines of communication, between the east and the west, will not be sufficient to accommodate the trade. But, still, the active rivalry north and south of us will require something better than State management, to render our Main Line worthy of being ranked with the Pennsylvania railroad, the Baltimore and Ohio railroad, the New York and Erie railroad, the New York line of railroads, by the side of the Erie canal from Buffalo to Albany, and the Grand Erie canal.—The active rivalry between the New York lines has already drawn, not only the whole trade of the Great Lakes through New York but is causing a large portion of that in the Ohio valley to pass around us, the long circuitous route, to the contrary notwithstanding. This New York rivalry and the want of it in Pennsylvania, is actually attracting trade and travel around us in the line of a periphery of a circle to New York, and demonstrates that high charges, bad management, and the prevention of rival parallel routes cannot force it through Pennsylvania to Philadelphia in a line of a diameter of the same circle. This state of things can only be remedied by the transfer of our Main Line of Public Works from the State to a competing, efficient company, where an army of lazy political drones cannot find employment, and where fraud and speculation will be discarded.

But sir, there is another reason for disposing of this Main Line, composed of alternate sections of railroads and canals to a company. It is the preservation of the purity of the public morals. No people ever has been, or ever will be truly free, that long suffers a festering corruption upon the body politic. One after another of the pillars of public virtue is undermined, upon which rests the arch of our free institutions, until the people themselves are fit only to be slaves, and seek refuge at last in the tyranny of a master. Such an amount of public patronage creates a love for office and place; cherishes idleness and a distaste for regular business; fosters speculation and extravagance, and ends at last in intemperance and crime.

Let us then pass this bill. The time and the circumstances are propitious, and render a sale as certain as its enactment into a law. The people will hail it with enthusiasm as the measure of their deliverance from the thralldom of a public debt. It will be a new era in the onward course to wealth, power, and greatness of our own Pennsylvania. And finally it will remove that gangrene from the body politic, that is now eating like a cancer into the vitals of our liberties.

At a camp meeting held in Connecticut, a preacher delivered himself of the following: "I would that the Gospel were a wedge and I a beetle; I'd whack it into every sinner's heart among you!"

## Letter from Oregon.

LINTON, O. T. }  
January 18th, 1853. }

Col. McC.—Dear Sir:— Being requested by some of my friends in Van Buren county, to write a little from Oregon and let them know something about what my experience has been in regard to travelling across the plains, and also something about this country, its climate and its resources, &c., &c., I will in the first place say that I will advise no person to come to this country, from the fact that I never saw as much distress in all my life as I seen on the plains, from sickness, while we traveled on Platte river. It was heart-rending to see the number of persons sick and the number that died from cholera. This was all the complaint on the first end of the route; however, this may not occur again in ten years. I have seen persons that have crossed every year for the last seven years, and they say that 1850 was the only year besides this year that there was any sickness on the road, and flux prevailed to some extent on the latter end of the route, and some few cases of mountain fever. I would advise all those that intend coming across the plains not to get frightened and run their teams to death to get away from the disease, for this will not do; the teams will not only suffer but also the sick will not get the necessary attention; but do not stop to nurse the sick except they are very sick, and be very careful how you give medicine in the absence of a physician, as the most of the deaths no doubt was occasioned by taking either too much medicine or else not the right kind. Every person ought to have some medicine, or rather get in a train where there is a doctor, this would be much the best, and never drink water from pools, wells or ponds nor springs, except some that are very clear and have no bad smell. Drink the water of Platte river. Always start early in the morning and camp early, never drive after night, for night travelling is sure to get you into dangers and difficulties and never stay two nights in one place, travel every day, if it is but three or five miles, you will find to be a duty. If you are to have preaching drive on Sabbath morning till the hour appointed, then stop, put your teams to grass, and then you can attend to your religious exercises. You will have to lay by about one day in a week or at least one day in two weeks to wash, and when these things are done, and you arrive in Oregon you will find that the winter is not far off. Do not use much salaratus in your bread, on this road, for this reason: the water you drink, and the very air you breathe is more or less impregnated with alkali, and the system is sufficiently charged without having it in your bread. It is a wonder that writers from Oregon have not instructed in regard to this particular before this time. The most wholesome bread for this trip, and the quickest made, is to have about a peck of dry rising made of corn meal and mix your dough in the evening and let it rise until morning, and bake for breakfast and dinner, and at noon mix again; put in the rising, knead it up in a large tin pan and it will be ready for to bake for supper, &c. The least ardent spirits is used on the road the better, but each family should have some, as it is a necessary medicine on this trip. As I said before, keep driving on, lose no time hunting or pleasuring on the road. Platte river is the place to make good time, and hundreds were mistaken in this matter the last season; they thought that this was the place to recruit their teams, but it is not the fact. I would advise the starting early enough so as to cross the Missouri river by the 20th of April, or at least the first of May, and keep along steady and you will find grass much better than if you are late starting, particularly on the last end of the road, and this is where the elephant is most generally seen. Start with one wagon more than you expect to bring through, load it with feed in case of an early start and throw it away when your feed is done; bring along some sole leather to use in case of loose tire.—Take off the tire and put leather between the felloes and also on the ends of the spokes, cut a hole in the leather so as to let it down to the shoulder of the spoke.—Bring plenty of wagon grease. The last end of the road you will need the most wagon grease, tar or black lead and lard or flour and lard. I shut not in this letter make out an outfit necessary for the trip, as it has been attended to by other writers, but I will tell one thing that has entirely been neglected, and it is very necessary: each driver should have a curry-comb and a good horse brush, and every night before unyoking your team, curry and brush all the dust out of the hair of your cattle. This will appear evident when I tell you that for twelve hundred miles there is not a tree or a stump or anything else for the cattle to rub against, and dust is intolerable on the latter part of the road. Do not drive your teams closer to each other than twenty yds. The dust is so bad that it makes the cattle low all the time and is bad on the lungs. But few carried their team; and those who did, had

nice fat cattle, and they would lick themselves, but those who did not curry and brush out the dust, their teams got sunny and got the hollow-horn, and hardly any of them made the rifle, but the most of them died on the road. If an ox gets his foot worn through on the bottom, have a shoe put on the lame side to raise it higher than the sore one. It would be well for each person to have a few shoes and nails with him, for they cannot be had on the road. And if an ox gets the foul foot take a piece of iron, as you can get any quantity of old iron on the road, heat it hot and put tar or rosin on the sore and burn it in with a hot iron, first clean out the sore and put a moccasin on the foot. I found no Indian troublesomeness. Before I close I would just say that each family should be well supplied with spirits of turpentine, and every day put a little on the cattle's horns and on their feet. People do not water their gardens here, as is supposed by some in the States.

Respectfully yours,  
SAMUEL E. BARR.  
Col. I. W. McMANAMAN.

## "ALL'S WELL!"

"Twelve o'clock at night, and all's well!"  
False prophet! Still and statue-like, at yonder window, stands the wife. The clock has told the small hours, yet her face is pressed closely against the window pane, striving in vain with straining eye, to pierce the darkness. She sees nothing—she hears nothing—but the beating of her own heart. Now she takes her seat, opens a small bible and seeks from it what comfort she may, while tears blister the pages. Then she clasps her hands, and her lips are tremulous with mute supplication. Hist! there is an unsteady step in the hall—she knows it! Many a time and oft it has trod on her very heart strings. She glides down gently to meet the wanderer. He falls heavily against her; and, in maddened tones, pronounces a name he had long since forgotten "to honor." Oh! all enduring power of woman's love!—no reproach, no upbraiding—the slight arm passed around the reeling figure (once erect in God's own image.) With tender words of entreaty which he is powerless to resist, if he would, she leads him in. It is but a repetition of a thousand such vigils! It is the performance of a vow, with a heroism and patient endurance too common and every day to be chronicled on earth; too holy and heavenly to pass unnoticed by the "registering angel" above.

"ALL'S WELL!" False prophet!—In yonder luxurious room sits one whose course it was to be as fair as a dream of Eden.—Time was, when those clear eyes looked lovingly into a mother's face—when a gray-haired father laid his trembling hand, with a blessing, on that fair head—when brothers' and sisters' voices blended with her own, in heart music around the happy hearth. Oh! where are they now? Are there none to say to the repentant Magdalene: "Neither do I condemn thee, go and sin no more!" Must the gilded fetter continue to bind the soul that loathes it, because man is less merciful than God?

"ALL'S WELL!" False prophet!—There lies the dead orphan. In all the length and breadths of the green earth, there was found no sheltering nest where the lonely dove could fold its wings, when the parent birds had flown. The brooding wing was gone that covered it from the cold winds of neglect and unkindness. Love was its life and so it dropped.

"ALL'S WELL!" False prophet! Sin walks the earth in purple and fine linen, honest poverty, with tear-bedecked face, hunger and shivers, and thirsts, while the publican stands afar off. The widow pleads in vain to the criminal Judge for justice; and, unpunished of Heaven, the human tiger crouches in his lair, and springs upon his helpless prey!

"ALL'S WELL!" Ah yes, all is well for he who seeth the end from the beginning! holds evenly the scales of justice. "Dirge shall yet beg of Lazarus." Every human tear is counted. They shall yet sparkle as gems in the crown of the patient and enduring disciple! When clear, broad light of eternity shines upon life's crooked paths, we shall see the snares and pitfalls from which our *hedge of thorns* has fenced us in! And in the maturity of our full grown faith, we shall greetingly say—"Father, not as I will, but as Thou wilt."

ONE VOTE.—Within the last dozen years the Governor of Massachusetts was twice elected by a majority of one. A recent paper says that a single vote sent Oliver Cromwell to the Long Parliament, Charles Stuart to the scaffold, revolutionized England, and made Great Britain free. One vote gave us the tariff in 1842, and one vote gave us Texas, and made war with Mexico, and purchased California, turned thither the tide of emigration, and will change the destiny of the world. Those who are in the habit of excusing themselves from attending elections, in the belief that one vote will not make much difference will do well to treasure up these facts and act under their influence.