

MESSAGE

ANDREW G. CURTIN, Governor of Pennsylvania.

To the Legislature, Jan. 30, 1866.

PENNSYLVANIA EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, Harrisburg, Pa., January 30, 1866. To the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Gentlemen:—We have cause to be thankful to Divine Providence for the blessings of peace within our borders, and the happy results attending the opening of your session, of the necessity under the pressure of which I was compelled, for the restoration of my health, to sojourn for a time in a warmer climate. I returned from Cuba refreshed and invigorated, and have resumed the discharge of my public duties. I cannot omit to acknowledge, with profound gratitude, the kind, considerate, and affectionate course which you pursued during my constrained absence. A heavy addition to my family has been the result, which I already owe to the people of the Commonwealth and their representatives. The balance in the Treasury, November 30, 1865, \$1,942,230.63. Receipts from January 1, 1866, to November 30, 1865, 6,219,089.67. Total in Treasury for fiscal year, ending November 30, 1865, 8,161,320.30. The payments for the same period have been 5,788,025.16. Balance in Treasury, Nov. 30, 1865, 2,373,295.14.

The operations of the Sinking Fund, during the year ending on the first Monday of September last, as stated in my proclamation, were as follows:— Amount of debt reduced, \$745,511.26, as follows, viz.: Five per cent. bonds, \$436,824.62. Company bonds, 230,000.00. War loans, 76,400.00. Interest certificates, 2,008.54. Domestic credits, 20,578.00. The discrepancy between the reduction of the public debt, as shown by the statement at the close of the fiscal year, and that in my proclamation at the close of the sinking fund year, arises from the fact that the one closes on the first Monday of September, the other on the 30th day of November. Amount of the public debt of Pennsylvania, as it stood on the first day of December, 1864, \$39,375,603.94. Amount redeemed at the State Treasury during the fiscal year ending with November 30, 1865, viz.: Five per cent. bonds, \$1,708,517.88. Four-and-a-half per cent. bonds, 20,578.00. Domestic credit certificates, 2,008.54. Military loan, act of May 15, 1861, 179,250.90. 1,909,355.88. The first call made by the President for troops to aid in suppressing the Rebellion was on the 15th of April, 1861, for seventy-five thousand men; and that of this number the quota of Pennsylvania was settled at fourteen regiments, to serve three months, unless sooner discharged. With unsurpassed alacrity and earnestness, volunteers to the service of the United States manifested the intuitive conviction of the people that the monstrous wickedness which had conceived an armed rebellion against the Constitution and the laws could not be suppressed by the ordinary means of the Government. Major-General Robert Patterson was assigned, by the General Government, to a command, which included the forces raised in Pennsylvania. Within a week after the call of the President, communication with Washington was almost entirely cut off. Prompted by the necessities of the situation, made on the 25th of April, a requisition upon me for twenty-five additional regiments of infantry and one of cavalry, to be forthwith furnished, was received. I accepted, from amongst the many pressing to be admitted into the service, a sufficient number of companies to fill it; care being taken to allow to each county, as nearly as possible an equal share. Ould regiments, however, in addition to the fourteen called for by the President, were organized and mustered into the service, before the order of General Patterson was countermanded, and under instructions from the War Department. On the 14th day of May, 1861, the Secretary of War, in a letter communicating the plan of organization for three years' regiments, contained the revocation of the order in the following words: "I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 13th of May, 1861, making in addition to the thirteen regiments of three months' militia, already called for, twenty-three regiments. It is important to reduce, rather than enlarge this number, and to accept of no more than twenty-three regiments, of which only ten are to serve during the war, and if more are already called for, to reduce the number by discharge." The twenty-five regiments raised as above stated comprised 20,779 men. The ardor of our people was unabated. Many of the companies, under my order, had arrived in camp at Harrisburg, and others maintained their organizations at their own expense, and by contributions from their neighbors and friends. In the critical condition of the country, and anticipating that, in case of reverse to our arms, the borders of Pennsylvania would be the portals to the rich granaries, manufacturing, and whole country of the North, I deemed it expedient to convene the Legislature, that adequate provision might be made to enable me to render the military power of the State as available and efficient as it should be, for the common defense of the State and the General Government; and accordingly, on the 20th of April, 1861, issued my proclamation, calling for a meeting of the General Assembly on the 30th of the same month. In message to the Legislature at its opening, I recommended the immediate organization, disciplining, and arming of at least fifteen regiments, exclusive of those called into the service of the United States. The Legislature acted promptly upon this suggestion, and made full provisions for its effectual accomplishment. The result was the early and complete organization, clothing, and equipment of the Pennsylvania Reserve Volunteer Corps, with its thirteen regiments of infantry, one of light artillery, and one of cavalry, under the supervision of George A. McCall, who was selected to command it, with the commission and rank of Major-General. This corps contained 15,800 men, and the whole expense of raising, clothing, equipage, subsistence, and paying them, until their entry into the United States service, was \$855,444.87. They were encamped in different parts of the State, excepting the two regiments commanded by Colonels Charles J. Biddle and Seneca G. Simmons, and two batteries of artillery, under the command of Colonel Charles T. Campbell, which, at the request of the War Department, were sent on the 23d of June, 1861, to the relief of Colonel Wallace, at Cumberland, Maryland, and remained for about six weeks there, and in Western Virginia, engaged in active operations. Towards the close of July the whole corps was called, or taken, on requisition into the service of the United States. Within four days after the disaster at Bull Run,

the levying of local taxes on bonds, mortgages, loans, and all property of that kind is also repealed. Such a repeal would largely encourage the investment of capital in the State, and add immensely to the wealth of the State, while the local authorities would lose very little, as it is notorious that, from the difficulties of assessment, they receive very little from these sources. In case of such a repeal, it is recommended that some effectual measure for enforcing correct returns of such objects of taxation, with appropriate penalties for the neglect or refusal to make them. Many of these recommendations, believing that it will lead to more equitable local taxation, and to greater economy in their disbursement. Many acts are on our statute books incorporating companies for various purposes, which companies have never been organized, or gone into operation. I recommend that all such acts be repealed by a general law, and that provision be made, that in future every act authorizing a corporation shall become void, unless the corporation shall have been organized and use its franchises within a limited time. Since my last annual message the war against armed treason has been brought to a close. Of the large contributions made by Pennsylvania to the national army, but few of the men who remain in the service. The spirit which animated our people at the outset of the Rebellion has never flagged; and we can look back with pride and satisfaction to the part taken by this State in the maintenance of the Government, and in its defense against the assaults of its enemies. In my first inaugural address, I took occasion to declare that Pennsylvania would, under any circumstances, maintain her faithful and generous support of the free institutions of the Union. The pledge so made was based upon my knowledge of the solid patriotism of her citizens. At that time danger threatened, but no one anticipated that it would break so suddenly, or grow to such fearful proportions as it is in a brief time assumed. My confidence in Pennsylvania, in her every yet unborn will, her ability and resources, has been fully justified by the manner in which she has done her duty during the late eventful period. On the request of the President of the United States, I made a communication to the Legislature, on the 9th day of April, 1861, setting forth that military organizations of a formidable character, which did not exceed the demands of any existing public exigency, had been formed in certain of the States, and that, whilst Pennsylvania yielded to no State in her respect for and willingness to protect by all needful means the constitutional rights and constitutional independence of her sister States, no contemplated attempt to resist the enforcement of the national law could meet with sympathy or encouragement from the people of this Commonwealth, and asked, and I requested, to organize a military bureau at the capital, and to amend and modify the militia laws as to give vitality and energy to the military organizations of the State. On the 12th day of the same month, I introduced a bill providing for the purposes indicated in my message. It will be remembered that this patriotic action of the Legislature occurred before it was known that hostilities had actually commenced, and that the Government, by the authority of any State, or by the National Legislature. The first call made by the President for troops to aid in suppressing the Rebellion was on the 15th of April, 1861, for seventy-five thousand men; and that of this number the quota of Pennsylvania was settled at fourteen regiments, to serve three months, unless sooner discharged. With unsurpassed alacrity and earnestness, volunteers to the service of the United States manifested the intuitive conviction of the people that the monstrous wickedness which had conceived an armed rebellion against the Constitution and the laws could not be suppressed by the ordinary means of the Government. Major-General Robert Patterson was assigned, by the General Government, to a command, which included the forces raised in Pennsylvania. 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of his people, than their prompt answer to the call made for military service for domestic protection. It is a record of which the great body of the people are a party, and of which they may all be proud. In July, 1864, a Rebel army again crossed the Potomac, threatening the southern border, and marching to Washington. Under the pressing demands of the national authorities, all the organized troops in Pennsylvania were immediately sent forward. The Rebel army was defeated and driven back. A Rebel column of three thousand men had, however, crossed the border, and, on the 30th of July, burned the town of Chambersburg. In my message of last year, I stated in detail the movements of the enemy, and the circumstances attending the destruction of that borough. Just to the people of all the southern border suffered much from annual incursions of the enemy, Chambersburg is the only town entirely destroyed within our border, and it is believed, in any loyal State. The citizens of the town were suddenly reduced to poverty, and, for a time, were sustained by the active benevolence of the people of other parts of the State, aided by an appropriation of one hundred thousand dollars from the Congress. The people of the town are now endeavoring to revive from this calamity, but it is now feared that few of them will be able to succeed. I submit, therefore, to the wisdom of the Legislature, whether it would not be proper to extend to that portion of the population an additional relief. The number of troops furnished the service, from Pennsylvania, during the Rebellion, may be stated as follows, viz.: During the year 1861, 123,034. Do do 1862, 43,048. Do do 1863, 91,704. Do do 1864, 35,840. 302,224. This statement is exclusive of militia and enlistments for the United States navy. I refer, for more perfect details of all the military operations of the State, to the reports of the Adjutant-General, and to my previous annual messages. This brief military record would be imperfect if I failed to commend the fidelity, zeal, and industry of the military departments of the State, and to express my personal obligations for the ready obedience and constant support I have uniformly received from the chiefs of the departments and officers of my personal staff. An approximate judgment of the amount of labor performed by these departments, and in the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth, may be made, when it is stated that forty-three thousand (43,000) military commissions were issued during the year. The first request for troops from this State was dated at Washington, on the 16th of April, 1861, and on the 16th the telegraph announced to the War Department that over four thousand men were being marched to the front. It is our proud privilege to have remembered that the first military aid from the loyal States which reached Washington, was the force of 400 Pennsylvanians, who arrived there on the 18th day of April, and who, in the capital of the nation, were the second line threatened after the battle of Bull Run, the regiments of the Pennsylvania Reserve Corps were the first troops sent forward. From the 15th of the war to its close the State has never faltered in its support of the Government. Proceeding in the strict line of duty, the resources of Pennsylvania, whether in men or money, have been put at the disposal of the Government. The history of the conduct of our people in the field is illuminated with incidents of heroic worth worthy of conspicuous notice, but it would be impossible to mention them in the brief space of this message. The promptness and efficiency of our arrangements in progress to have a complete history of our regiments, such as has been contemplated and is provided for in an act of the Legislature, passed on this subject, commend the report of the Executive Military Department to your favorable consideration. It would be alike impossible to furnish a history of the associated benevolence and of the patriotic and heroic spirit of our people in the field and hospital, or of the names and services, at all times, of our volunteer surgeons, when called to assist in the hospital or on the battlefield; nor is it possible to do justice to the patriotic Christian men who were always ready to respond when summoned to the exercise of acts of humanity and benevolence. Our armies were sustained and strengthened in the field by the patriotic devotion of their officers at home; and we can never render full justice to the heaven-directed, patriotic, Christian benevolence of the women of the State. During the war I had occasion, from time to time, to already participate, and on many occasions on subjects bearing upon the interests of the men representing the State in the armies of the Republic. It is with a sense of unfeigned gratitude that I acknowledge the patriotic and noble spirit of the Legislature and the people acted upon my suggestions, whether for the support of the Government, the enlistment and organization of troops, or for the comfort of our people already in the field. Without this generous confidence and liberal support, the labors of the Executive would have been in vain; the treasure that has been expended would have been wasted, precious lives which have been sacrificed, and the hearts of kindred and friends would have been without solace, the strong men, whose health has been broken and whose bodies have been maimed, would have been monuments of honor, and the country would have been degraded amidst the fallen ruins of the institutions of the Republic. The report of the Hon. Thomas H. Burrows, shows the satisfactory result of his active management of the system adopted by the State for the maintenance and education of the orphans of our soldiers. His report exhibits the fact, that 1247 orphans are now actually admitted to the schools, and that 1846 applications in all have been allowed; and orders issued for admission, many of whom have been admitted since his report. It will also be seen, that the largest appropriation that ever will be required, will be for this and the two ensuing years, and that then the amount will be gradually reduced. I have heretofore commended this charity to you, and I deem it unnecessary to add another word, in asking a continuation of an appropriation which is to provide for and educate the best blood of the State, and support the living legacies which have been bequeathed us by the men who laid down their lives for the country. When we remember that every sort of public aid is being given to the orphans of soldiers, and that every soldier who goes to the front is given to the orphans should become the children of the State, I hesitate not for an instant to suppose that you will liberally consent to an appropriation which is to bless their little ones, providing comfortable homes, instead of leaving them in want and destitution, many of them to fall victims to vice and crime. At the time of the invasion of the North, in 1862, by the Rebel army, the President made a requisition on me for militia to serve during the emergency. The men came forward promptly, to the number of 36,088, of whom upwards of 25,000 refused to be mustered into the service of the United States, in consequence of circumstances of prior occurrence not necessary to be here stated. In this embarrassment, the emergency being very pressing, after consultation with the President, he authorized, and requested me to call them on behalf of the State, and for the defense of the State, the United States paying all the

expenses of their clothing, equipment, subsistence, etc. It was, however, alleged that there was no appropriation for their pay. To remove this difficulty the General Government applied to banks and other moneyed corporations in Philadelphia to advance the amount of the pay, on a pledge that, when Congress met, the passage of a bill to reimburse them should be recommended. These institutions declined this proposition, but expressed their willingness to make the advance if I would pledge myself to recommend to the Legislature the passage of such an act in case Congress should not provide for reimbursement. Under these circumstances I received from the Executive of the United States the pledge which he had proposed to give to the banks, etc., and upon that I gave the necessary pledge to them, and they advanced the required funds accordingly. The following telegram from the Secretary of War will show in part the ground on which I acted:— Washington, July 22, 1862.—To His Excellency Governor Curtin:—3 telegrams respecting the pay of militia called out under your proclamation of the 21st of June have been referred to the President by the War Department, and your consideration. He directs me to say that, while no law or appropriation authorizes the payment by the Federal Government of troops that have not seen military service, the appropriation will be made to the Secretary of War will show in part the ground on which I acted:— Washington, July 22, 1862.—To His Excellency Governor Curtin:—3 telegrams respecting the pay of militia called out under your proclamation of the 21st of June have been referred to the President by the War Department, and your consideration. 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