FOREIGN MAIL GLEANINGS

REFORM OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS.

MEETING AT BIRMINGHAM—SPEECHES AND RESOLUTION IN FAVOR OF A REORGANIZATION OF THE HOUSE.

On the 22d of August a Liberal demonstration took place in the Town Hall of Birmingham, England, in favor of a reform in the House of Lords. Mr. George Dixon, M. P., was present. Mr. J. S. Wright, Chairman of the Birmingham Liberal Association, presided. The meeting was one of the largest held in that city for a long time. The Chairman said that Birmingham had often given the key-note to the country on such questions. The people of that city were the first on that occasion to hold a public meeting, but before next Parliament he had no doubt that the country would have pronounced emphatically on that subject. [Cheers.] The question was no less than that of the continuance of the prerogative of the second Chamber of the Legislature, but the recent insults given to the people of England led them seriously to consider whether that prerogative should be continued. [Cheers.] The unloosing of the Church from its moorings to the State [loud cheers] and other questions could not be left to the tender mercies of the peers, and it would be necessary soon to have a really vital change in the House of Lords. [Renewed cheering.]

Mr. Geo. Dixon, M. P., who was received most enthusiastically, reviewed the leading points of the Ballot bill in a speech which was warmly cheered. He dwelt on the importance of throwing the expenses of elections on the rates, this being the only means by which a poor working man could be elected. The plea of the Lords that they had not time to consider the bill which they had thrown out, was a declaration that they were either unwilling or incapable of performing the duties for which they exist. How was the House of Lords to be dealt with? [Cries of "Turn them out."]. "We must take care that in reforming the House of Lords," he said, "we do not strengthen its present prerogatives. An elective House might be stronger than an hereditary one; and one thing we must secure, that the Chamber shall henceforward have the power to veto a measure only once." [Much cheering.] He said he did not even shrink from abolishing the House of Lords. [Prolonged cheering.]

A resolution was adopted declaring it to be imperative that the constitution of the second Chamber should be so modified as to bring it into harmony with public opinion.

MEETING AT LEEDS—CENSURE OF THE HOUSE OF LORDS AND COMMENDATION OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

A crowded meeting was held at Leeds, England, on the evening of the 22d of August, the Mayor presiding, to consider the conduct of the House of Lords in reference to the Ballot bill. The resolutions, which were all but unanimously passed, recorded a protest against the unceremonious manner in which the Lords had treated the wishes of the country, and tendered the thanks of the assembly to the Government for their determination to push the bill through the Commons during the session just closed. A hope was expressed that the bill, amended so as to provide for keeping open the poll until 8 o'clock, will be introduced early next session. The meeting further resolved: "That, as the House of Lords refused to consider the Ballot bill in the month of August, alleging want of time as the excuse, the time has come when it is necessary to consider the constitution of the Assembly with a view to bring it into practical harmony with a House of Commons elected on the basis of universal suffrage." The speakers included Alderman Carter, M. P., Alderman Joy, Alderman Tatham, Councilor Nettleton, and Mr. T. K. Clarke.

OPINIONS OF THE LONDON PRESS.

From The Times of Aug. 24.

A man must be poor indeed who has not some Gilead to which he may resort for balm when suffering from the strokes of fate. His rivals outdo him, his schemes are peremptorily defeated, and are left to fall to pieces with contemptuous indifference; but when he turns to his clique, to his club, to his family, or to his own bosom, he finds in some quarter or other the comforting assurance that it was not his fault, but rather the envy and malice of his enemies, which made them fail. As with a man, so it is with a party. The provincial wire-pullers who claim to be the genuine professors of the purest Liberalism are seeking consolation for the failures of the session. London cannot be whipped into wrath; but it is thought something may be done in the country. At Birmingham and Leeds meetings have been called, and it has been resolved, not, however, without some differences of opinion, that the Lords have done it all. Much comfort is found in this resolution. Under cover of it everything else can, for the moment at least, be forgotten. It is, to be sure, untrue; but it serves its temporary purpose. It endeavors to obscure the acknowledged truth that the Ballot was taken up too late and pushed forward with no hope of passing it, but simply to make a show of vigor. It drops out of sight the awkward fact that important clauses of the Ballot bill were thrown overboard, leaving a fragment to do service for the whole. All it is sought to recall is that the Lords put aside a measure which the Ministry neither expected nor desired them to pass, and thus it is made to appear that the Upper House has been the cause of the failures of the year. Mr. Dixon took part in the meeting at Birmingham, and if there were any chance of his attending any more such gatherings we would ask him to avail himself of his experience at Westminster, and tell his country friends why all classes of politicians in London—Whigs, Radicals, and even Republicans no less than Conservatives—have accepted the act of the Lords with profound equanimity. Not that we complain of Mr. Dixon. He has his private as well as his party griefs, and nothing could be more natural than that he should join heartily in laying upon the first scapegoat which came to hand the sins of an untoward generation.

From The Daily News of Aug. 24.

We have, as everybody knows, to readjust our electoral system. We have, according to Birmingham, Leeds, and other places not wholly uninfluential and unreasonable, to do more—to remodel our entire Parliamentary system. This is not all. We have, according to a proposition which we are assured is destined to unite the Irish representatives, the pleasing task of reconstructing our whole scheme of Imperial Government. Now we may not, perhaps, accept the last two tasks as positively impudent, but in order to avert them we shall certainly have to show the reason why. We shall have to give evidence that the House of Lords is an essential, or useful member of our body politic; we shall have to make up our minds as to whether we intend to keep it on its present footing or not. So of the Irish question—the Home Rule question. It will undoubtedly be pressed upon public consideration. And the time has gone by when demands of that kind could be settled by a short debate and a contemptuous division. Those who believe with us that there is no real necessity for Medea-caldron experiments in political reorganization, will have to do something toward finding an argumentative basis for their faith. They will have to discover a reason which, if it does not satisfy, may at least give pause to that peculiar and characteristic impulse of the present which would push political principles to their utmost logical conclusion, and would rather begin at the beginning and do all over again, than to endeavor to reconcile existing realities with the aspirations of the spirit of reform.

From The Standard of Aug. 24.

The friends of the Government are doing it but poor service in endeavoring to get up a cry against the House of Lords. The attempt to do the Ministry a kindly turn is laudable enough, but the motive lies to apparently upon the surface. Just now it is not the House of Lords, but Mr. Gladstone and his colleagues, who are on their trial. The country summons them to account for the wasted session, and the blunders and failures which have marked their Administration, and it is a poor device to attempt to divert popular indignation by an attack on the Lords. It is not the Peers who have saddled the tax-payers with a charge of twelve or fifteen millions to gratify a Radical crotchet. It is not they who have set aside the authority of Parliament and abused the power of the Crown. They are in no sense responsible for the barrenness of the session and the postponement of all useful legislation.

MEXICO AND GREAT BRITAIN.

DISCUSSION IN THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT—OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF ENGLAND'S ATTITUDE TOWARD MEXICO.

In the British House of Commons on the 19th ult., Mr. Sheridan called attention to the position of British subjects in Mexico, pending the non-renewal by England of diplomatic communications with that state, and asked what steps the Government proposed to take to protect English subjects who were unpaid creditors of Mexico, and whose interests were made the subject of special treaty in 1859–60, by a diplomatic convention known as the Dunlop and Aldham Convention, and moved for papers. He said that in order that the money might be punctually paid by Mexico, the creditors had consented that the interest should be reduced to three per cent. Notwithstanding that concession the interest had not been paid to the creditors, and the bonded debt amounted to $70,000,000. Mexico had sent home the English representatives, and in that way attempted to get rid of her largest creditors. This was a device which one could only expect to see adopted by a shallow knave. At that moment there was a mixed commission sitting at Washington to decide the claims of American subjects against Mexico, and within the last week Germany had startled the world by declaring that the claims of her Prussian subjects, with reference to Roumanian bonds, would be made an international question. He hoped that the Foreign Secretary would deal with the whole subject in the spirit in which Lord Clarendon always regarded it; that he would help the bondholders as far as lay in his power, and that he would consent to receive, at his earliest convenience, a deputation from the bondholders.

Lord Enfield regretted that the honorable gentleman had not introduced this question, which was of considerable importance and difficulty, at an earlier period of the session, saying the House was aware that all diplomatic relations between Great Britain and Mexico were suspended. The Mexican Government refused to hold any diplomatic communications with the agents of the Powers which recognized the dynasty and rule of the late Emperor Maximilian, and Her Majesty's Government felt it was not possible, under those circumstances, to continue any diplomatic intercourse with Mexico. On the 25th of October, 1867, Mr. Middleton, who then represented British interests in Mexico, was required to demand his passport, and he left that country. The same remark applied to the English Consul-General. Since that time all diplomatic communications had been interrupted, and at the present moment it was only through the instrumentality of Lloyd's agent at Tampico that any communication or news with regard to commercial or monetary transactions was obtained. In 1849 or 1850, an agreement was made between the Mexican Government and the bondholders, by which the rate of interest was reduced from 5 to 3 per cent, the Government undertaking that a certain percentage of customs duties should be paid to the bondholders. That arrangement was carried out by a law in 1850, and further ratified by another Mexican law in 1851. In 1853 the two naval officers, Capt. Dunlop and Capt. Aldham, made a convention with the Mexican Government, by which the latter agreed to assign 40 per cent of the customs duties at Vera Cruz and Tampico. That was the first diplomatic recognition of the claims of the bondholders; but, unfortunately, the Mexican Government pleaded poverty as the ground of their non-fulfillment of the engagement. In March, 1865, Mr. Scarlett was specially instructed to represent to the Mexican Government the opinion which Her Majesty's Government entertained on the subject, and he told them that, in their view, the Dunlop and Aldham Convention was as binding as any other treaty engagement. Lord Enfield said he believed he was justified in stating to the House that the Mexican Government did not disown the legal obligation of that convention, but that they looked upon all conventions as being abrogated in consequence of the suspension of diplomatic relations between the two countries. Mr. Sheridan would doubtless recognize the delicate position in which Her Majesty's Government was placed with regard to Mexico. Any assurance would be premature, but Lord Enfield said he would suggest to Mr. Sheridan that the case of the bondholders should be carefully submitted to Earl Granville, who, after his return from Scotland, would no doubt give his patient attention to the whole subject. Meanwhile, it was hoped that the Mexican Government would reconsider the position they had taken up, and would, either of their own accord or through the instrumentality of some friendly Power, make the first advances toward Great Britain—advances which would be met in a spirit of friendship and cordiality. [Hear, hear.]

THE AMERICAN DEPUTATION TO THE CZAR.

St. Petersburg (Aug. 18) Correspondence of The London Standard.

The Russian papers compliment the Chancellor on his answer to the delegates from the Evangelical Alliance, and the *Moscow Gazette* asks what the Americans would think if the Russians were to proffer their advice to the Government of the United States about the Mormons, and what Lord Granville would say to an Orthodox deputation that presumed to interfere in favor of the Irish Catholics. The Moscow paper asserts that in reality the foreign religious communities here enjoy more liberty than the Orthodox Church itself. Government grants are made in favor of the churches, schools, and seminaries, not only of the Christian communities of various denominations, but even of those belonging to the Jews and Mohammedans. In a pecuniary point of view the Orthodox clergy are worse off than the ministers of any other religion in Russia—the Roman Catholic clergy in Poland are much better paid than the Russian clergy. But though the delegates failed to obtain any immediate result, it must not be concluded that their pains have been thrown away; it may yet be seen that their manifestation has done some good to the Protestant cause. In the midst of the multifarious reforms in Russia the religious question has hardly been touched. But its turn will come, and when the time for its solution arrives, the opinions of the Protestants of Europe, expressed through such an influential body, will undoubtedly have considerable weight.

THE GERMAN NAVAL ARMAMENTS.

From the German Correspondent of Aug. 19.

The defensive works at the mouth of the Weser are to be strengthened by the erection of two new forts, one of which will be built on the Langlütjensand, about 6,000 feet further down the stream than the works now in course of construction there, while the other will be situated in the vicinity of Bremen. When these are completed, the defenses of the Weser will consist of four powerful works from which a double cross-fire might be opened on a hostile fleet. A steamboat has been sent from Kiel for the purpose of running between Geestemünde and Fort Langlütjensand, and as soon as the fortifications are complete the bridge which now unites the fort with the mainland will be broken down, and the former surrounded by water.

The newly built screw advice-ships Nautilus and Albatross will, next year, join the German East Asiatic squadron, which will then consist of four vessels with 48 guns. The Nautilus and the Albatross have been specially constructed and fitted up for this branch of the service, but the experience of late years has led to the conviction that it will be well to modify the plan of constructing a fleet exclusively of corvettes for this station, as in spite of the advantages arising from their superior speed, the comparative weakness of their artillery makes them much less formidable than the heavy, or even the middle-sized frigates of the English or the French navy. The question is therefore now under consideration whether it may not be advisable to send one or two frigates of a middle size to the East Asiatic waters, which might then be accompanied by a number of swift advice-boats of light draft, but armed with heavy artillery, for the purpose of pursuing and destroying the pirate vessels which infest those seas. In the original plan, the place of the proposed frigates was to be taken by iron-clad corvettes, and the Hansa, now in course of construction, was intended for this purpose. The unwieldy character of the iron-clads, however, render them but ill-suited for seas exposed to sudden and violent storms, bounded by dangerous coasts, and full of hidden rocks, where, too, in case their machines were injured or any other accident occurred, they could not be properly repaired. On the other hand, it does not seem advisable to diminish the small number of iron-clads which Germany at present has at her disposal by sending one to so distant a station.

AN INSOLENT CORPORATION REBUKED.

THE UNION FERRY COMPANY'S ENCROACHMENTS ON BROOKLYN CITY PROPERTY—THE CORPORATION COUNSEL ADVISES THE STREET COMMISSIONER TO REMOVE THE NEW FERRY-HOUSE.

The framework of the new and handsome ferry building at the foot of Fulton-st., Brooklyn, was in position before Street Commissioner Furey discovered that the Ferry Company had encroached 25 feet upon the city property. He immediately ordered the removal of the obstructions, but Cyrus P. Smith, Managing Director of the Ferry Company, refused to take away the building, claiming that the Chairman of the Committee of the Board of Aldermen on Ferry and Water Rights had given the Company permission to use the disputed grounds. The matter was referred to Corporation Counsel DeWitt, who rendered yesterday the following opinion, adverse to the claims of the Ferry Company:

OFFICE OF THE CORPORATION COUNSEL, CITY HALL, BROOKLYN, Sept. 5, 1871.

ROBERT FUREY, *esq., Street Commissioner.*

SIR: You have reported to the Department that, some time since, the Union Ferry Company in building a new ferry-house, at the foot of Fulton-st., projected its foundation far beyond the limits of their old structure, and thus entered into possession and occupancy of a large portion of the old streets. You have stated that you caused inquiry to be made of the Company by what authority they claimed a right to make this encroachment, and that your inquiries were not answered, but that they were treated with disrespect; that you took proceedings of arrest against one of the workmen upon the new building; that the Company, while allowing their employé to be fined without opposition, have still continued their erection, and that the many efforts you have thus far made to establish the rights of the city, instead of receiving the respect of the Company, have only subjected you at their hands to insult and reproach. You now ask me as your legally constituted adviser what course should be pursued.

No outrage upon the right of and dignity of the city could be more flagrant than the one you narrate. The streets upon which this new encroachment is made are among the oldest we possess. Indeed, it is fair to say, from the decision of the Court of Appeals in Duman agt. Williams, 37 New-York, that Fulton-st. has fallen to the city by succession from the old Dutch Government, which required it in the earliest settlement, by such a dedication as, unlike the city's rights in most of the streets, is one of ownership of the land in *fee simple absolute*. But whether the tenure is thus full or of a more limited character, it is in the minds of all that both Water and Fulton-sts. at the point in question have been in the possession and control of the city since 1835. Over them the city has exercised its authority, placed its police force, and enforced its authority these many years. In the year 1835, Water-st. was opened by the city, and shortly after by the city it was graded and paved. Fulton-st. has been graded and repaved by the city before and since the Ferry Company came into existence. No one knew better than this corporation that the right of the city to those streets stood beyond its challenge.

This Department commands the evidence to show that the officers of the Ferry Company admitted that they were trespassers in making this extension, and the fact that such men should indulge the flimsy pretext that they were justified in violation of municipal right, because they had received the permission of a single Alderman—the assumption of whose power they well knew to be ridiculous—shows how fully conscious they were of their own guilt, but how fully superior they also felt to the lawfully constituted authorities. I have said these men knew they were engaged in a trespass; they knew more; they knew if the possession of this entire portion of the street was essential to a more liberal operation of their ferry or the public accommodation, that they could and should submit the matter to the City Government, that the City Government might adjust it. That, with no fair a course before them, this wealthy corporation should knowingly seize a portion of the public streets and then stodiously insult and defy the municipal authorities, is, I repeat, as flagrant an outrage upon city rights as could be devised. The mode and power of redress are both, happily, plain and ample.

This matter, sir, will be seen, is in your hands; the Legislature by one charter has not only inverted the City Government with the right of opening, grading, paving, and regulating streets, but it expressly authorizes the Common Council to make rules and regulations "to prevent and remove obstructions and encroachments in and upon all wharves, streets, and public places." (See chapter 63, laws of 1862, section 13.) It is the creation of your office the Legislature imposed upon you the "duty of performing all services" thus required by the Common Council in relation to "widening or regulating, grading and paving streets and avenues, with such other duties as may from time to time be prescated for your consideration by the Common Council not inconsistent with your office." The Common Council, in view of this plainly vested power, after giving to the Street Commissioner general supervision over all the streets, avenues, squares, wharves and piers, and public places of the city, made to your Department the following express assignment of duty:

"He shall have power to remove or cause to be removed any obstructions or incumbrances from all the streets, lanes, alleys, roads, wards, and public places in the city. He shall report any person abusing any such restriction to the Attorney for prosecution, and the expense of such removal shall be paid out of any moneys in the treasury; and the financial officials of the city are authorized to pay the same, and draw warrants therefor." (Sec. 7, Laws and Ordinances, page 263.)

Here you will perceive is an express provision that the obstructions shall be removed, and the expense attended thereon in employing men, implements, &c., shall be liquidated without the intervention of the Common Council, the person causing the obstruction being liable for the same.

A municipal government is not compelled to seek the intervention of the courts to enforce its processes. It abandons its just rights and dignity if it fails to enforce them itself. In common law a State could not sue or be sued, it being assumed that it hath the strength to execute its own power, and equity to meet all its obligations. While this doctrine has been somewhat altered under our system of government, it nevertheless remains true with us, and as to political power, the State must execute for itself. The State and the city stand alike in this particular.

Both, under our system, may sue in our Courts to collect a debt or enforce an ejectment, where either is the owner in fee. But that the State should have to sue to carry out any of its political powers, such as repelling invasion, or that the city must invoke the aid of the Courts in managing its governmental jurisdiction over its streets, are in my judgment propositions which neither government can entertain without surrendering its dignity. Through the Legislature and the Common Council your department has become the repository of the power to clear the streets of the city from any and all obstructions.

In executing this trust you have a right, if need be, to call to your assistance the entire force of the police. It is to be purpose that we have a City Government if any trespasser may set it at defiance. The just power and dignity of the Government are gone if, after you have been insulted and repelled by a corporation occupying a public highway, you are driven to pursue only the dilatory remedy of a suit in ejectment, through all the stages of a protracted litigation, before the city can make its authority known and felt.

Now, any we required to make minute and laborious investigation into the city's title before you proceed. The fact that the Government of your city has for years been in full possession of an open, graded, and paved street, which by your maps and records has limits upon which infringements are being made, is in my judgment sufficient.

If this long-continued jurisdiction has been faulty in origin, if there is some long-standing difficulty in the public title, it is for the party making the encroachment under such a claim to seek the intervention of the courts. Strange if a policeman in making an arrest is to be held seriously accountable for the technical validity of the statute creating the offense, or the constitutionality of the act calling his force into being. It is enough for you to know that there has been a deliberate encroachment upon land, paved, controlled, and acknowledged as a public street for nearly a long series of years; and an encroachment made with a confession of trespass; and, above all, an encroachment accompanied by a defiance of the City's power, and an insult to the City's dignity.

To my mind, your duty is plain. Give the Company a short notice to withdraw the obstruction. If they neglect or fail to obtain the approval of the City Government, proceed to the spot, taking with you all the force necessary for the enterprise, and, no matter whether the obstructions be the finished edifice of a wealthy corporation or a family, in the steady language of the law remove the obstruction.

In such emergency governments, to be respectable, must use force.

Respectfully yours, W. C. DEWITT.

Some prominent women of Washington, meditating upon "the social evil" and their own duties in regard to it, resolved to visit in person some of the fashionable haunts of vice in that city, and, by free and friendly conversation with the inmates, to gather information that would guide them in the adoption of measures for the purification of society. They were courteously treated, and the revelations made to them were valuable as well as painful. This movement, if carried out in a right spirit, and kept free from morbid sensationalism, may lead to good results.

PENNSYLVANIA WAR CLAIMS

MISREPRESENTATIONS CORRECTED—A HISTORY OF THE WHOLE TRANSACTION.

To the Editor of The Tribune.

SIR: During the past two weeks a great deal has been said in the public press in regard to the collection of the war claims of Pennsylvania upon the General Government. The statements thus made are in conflict with each other, and at variance, more or less, with the facts of the case. As the matter has been presented, it is calculated to mislead the public judgment as to the honesty and fidelity of the State Administration. It is equally due, therefore, to the authorities and the people of the Commonwealth that the whole truth respecting the grave matter in question should be made known. The unkind and bitter discussions in the newspapers have been observed by many of our best citizens of all parties with surprise and regret. As a Republican friend of Gov. Geary, and a lover of justice and fair dealing, I have carefully examined this whole subject, and deem it proper to correct the various misrepresentations that have been made to the public by giving the true history and the real facts of the whole transaction, substantiated by documents obtained from official sources, and I ask that the truth may now be as extensively circulated as have been the errors it is intended to correct. (1.) The General Government had claims against the State for $606,000, advanced Sept. 19, 1861, to aid the State in the equipment of troops, and $1,304,711 43, the State's quota of a direct tax levied on the several States for war purposes by act of Congress. (2.) As an offset to the United States claims, the State had vast numbers of small vouchers for expenditures for the transportation, subsistence, and equipment of troops, and other expenses incidental thereto, amounting in the aggregate to $2,118,419 33. (3.) To collect these claims of the State against the General Government, and to adjust and settle the accounts respectively, Col. Morton McMichael, jr., was appointed Agent of the State by Gov. Curtin, Dec. 24, 1861. (4.) During the term of Col. McMichael's agency he filed State claims against the Government in the proper departments at Washington, as follows:

March 1, 1862.—First installment	$1,182,997 22
March 11, 1862.—Second installment	854,337 20
Feb. 20, 1863.—Third installment	81,084 91
Total	$2,118,419 33

Of this sum he succeeded in obtaining the allowance of only $112 50. At the expiration of the agent's term of office, the balance of the State's account, amounting to $2,118,306 83, was suspended and disallowed. This was mainly for the reason that he had failed to produce such satisfactory evidence as in the judgment of the Federal accounting officers was necessary to establish the validity of the vouchers. (5.) From the time when his agency ceased, until the Spring of 1867, no further efforts appear to have been made to settle the vouchers of the State, upwards of which had been filed upward of five years. Late in the session of the General Assembly of that year the following preamble and joint resolution were introduced, and unanimously passed through both Houses:

Whereas, There are supposed to be due, by the United States to the State of Pennsylvania, various amounts, for disbursements made during the Rebellion, but disallowed by the accounting officers of the General Government; and

Whereas, It is believed that by carefully supplying deficient testimony, many of the amounts may be collected; therefore, be it

Resolved, By the Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, in General Assembly met, that the Governor be and is hereby authorized to appoint a Special Agent to collect the disallowed and suspended claims of the State against the United States, whose compensation, for that purpose, shall not exceed 10 per centum of the amounts thus collected, and shall be paid out of such collections.

JOHN P. GLASS, Speaker of the House of Representatives.
LOUIS W. HALL, Speaker of the Senate.

Approved the 23d day of March, A. D., 1869.

JNO. W. GEARY.

(6.) Mr. Geo. O. Evans, formerly of the firm of Evans & Hassall, Philadelphia, having been strongly recommended by influential business men of that city, and by members of the General Assembly, was appointed agent by Gov. Geary, in accordance with the foregoing resolution. After the Governor had signed the resolution and appointed the agent, upon reëxamination he perceived that the resolution had not been made sufficiently binding upon the agent; that it did not designate to whom the moneys, if any were collected, should be paid, nor when, nor require the agent to give bond for the faithful performance of his duty; and so, to supply its deficiencies before issuing to the agent his commission, the Governor required him to sign the following agreement:

"I, Geo. O. Evans, of the City of Philadelphia, having been appointed and commissioned by the Governor of Pennsylvania, under joint resolution of the Legislature, March 22, 1867, to collect sundry claims in said resolution mentioned, do hereby obligate myself to forthwith pay over to the State Treasurer of Pennsylvania all moneys which I may be able to collect under said authority, less the compensation allowed, and to make semi-annual reports to said State Treasurer of the amounts collected and the sources from which derived; and also to make annual reports to said Governor, under oath, including the amounts collected, and a statement of all claims ascertained to be due the State, and from what sources; and further agree, before entering upon the duties of my appointment, to give bond to the Commonwealth in the sum of $10,000, with the sureties conditioned for the faithful performance of my duties under said joint resolution and this agreement; said bond to be approved by the Governor, and filed in the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth.

"In testimony whereof I have hereunto set my hand and seal at Harrisburg this 23d day of March, A.D., 1867. GEO. O. EVANS."

J. Jordan, W. C. Armor, Witnesses.

And now in regard to the resolution authorizing the appointing of an agent, and the agreement under which he was to perform his duty, a few words of explanation will be proper in this place. The resolution was not finally acted upon till a late period of the session. The impression of the members was, perhaps without exception, that but little could be realized. Col. McMichael's attempt to collect the claims he had filed, during the administration of Gov. Curtin, had signally failed. The difficulties that would impede the task of collection of old and rejected claims were known to be many and great; these circumstances mainly account for the manifestly loose and unguarded character of the resolution. The same circumstances, in a measure, influenced the character of the agreement. The Governor shared with the General Assembly the impression that but little money would be collected. This fact accounts for the smallness of the sum in which the agent was required to give bond. He presumed that the agent would at no stage of his proceedings have any large sums of money in hand, and consequently felt that in requiring an annual report to himself, and a semi-annual report to the State Treasurer, together with a bond in the sum of $10,000, the interests of the Commonwealth would be adequately protected. Evidently the thoughts uppermost in the minds of the Legislature and the Executive were that the agent would collect little, if anything, and that the failure of the attempt should be at his own risk and not at the cost of the State.

As has been previously stated, Col. McMichael in the years 1862 and 1863, filed claims of the State in the Federal Treasury Department amounting to $2,118,419 33. Either he or some one else represented to Gov. Curtin that the greater part of this sum had been allowed by the Federal accounting authorities, and placed to the credit of the State in liquidation of the quota of direct tax due from the State to the General Government. Hence the following statement in the annual message of Gov. Curtin of Jan. 7, 1862: "This [the $1,946,719 33 direct tax due from the State to the United States] was paid partly by the relinquishment of a portion of the sums claimed by the State from the Government."

The portion of the State claims represented to Gov. Curtin as having been allowed, and applied to the extinguishment of the State's quota of direct tax amounted to $1,304,711 41. It is painful to be obliged to say that the representation was founded on a misrepresentation of the facts, as will be seen from the following certificates:

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, CONTROLLER'S OFFICE, May 3, 1867.

In a special settlement of the accounts of the State of Pennsylvania, No. 3,303, made in this office in the month of April, 1867, the sum of $1,969,115 83 heretofore disallowed, has been allowed and credited to the state, on explanations made and filed by Mr. Geo. O. Evans, Special Agent, &c.

J. M. BROOMHEAD, Controller.

TREASURY DEPARTMENT, THIRD AUDITOR'S OFFICE, Aug. 14, 1871.

SIR: In accordance with your verbal request I have the honor to state that, on settlement of the War claims of the State of Pennsylvania, amounting to $2,118,419 33, which was returned from the Second Controller's Office Feb. 9, 1866, the State was charged with $606,000 advanced Sept. 19, 1861, on Requisition No. 5,068, the whole amount was suspended or disallowed with the exception of $112 50. A special settlement was made April 25, 1867, and the sum of $1,939,115 83 allowed, from which was deducted the advance of $606,000, and the further sum of $1,304,711 43 was carried by counter warrant to the credit of the State on account of the balance of quota of direct tax. The balance, $78,516 89, was paid to the State on Requisition No. 3,125.

Very respectfully, ALLAN RUTHERFORD, Auditor.

Mr. Evans gave bond and received his commission as agent on the 23d of March, 1867. In about six weeks, by presenting additional evidences that were deemed sufficient by the accounting officers, he succeeded in having settled and having allowed to the State, of the claims filed by Col. McMichael, which had been suspended and disallowed, excepting the trifles of $112 50, the sum of $1,969,227 32. Out of this was paid the $606,000 which the General Government had advanced to the State for war purposes, Sept. 19, 1861, and the remainder of the State quota of the direct tax due the United States Government, which was $1,304,711 43. The remainder of the whole sum allowed on this first settlement was $78,516 89, and was paid to Mr. Evans, leaving still to be settled and allowed, of the claims filed by Col. McMichael, the sum of $129,079 51.

There was still a large amount of claims that were believed to be due to the State which had not been filed; these Mr. Evans obtained from the Auditor-General's Department, at Harrisburg, and filed in the proper departments at Washington, as follows:

May 4, 1870	$267,933 18	May 25, 1871	$33,737 77
June 30, 1870	762,127 91		

These sums added to that of $129,079 51 remaining unsettled of the claims filed by Col. McMichael, made a total of $1,192,878 87.

To enable Mr. Evans to file and settle the claims which he obtained as hereinbefore stated, it was necessary he should be clothed with the authority conveyed to him in the following paper:

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, HARRISBURG, PENN., April 13, 1870.

To the Honorable GEO. S. BOUTWELL, *Secretary of the Treasury U. S.*

GREETING: I hereby nominate and appoint Geo. O. Evans to act for me as my duly authorized agent under the act of Congress July 27, 1861 ("for reimbursement of expenses properly incurred by the States respectively, on account of their troops employed in aiding to suppress the present insurrection against the United States"), to present for settlement the claims of the State of Pennsylvania arising under the said act, or any other act of Congress, for arming, equipping, paying, clothing, subsisting, and transporting, &c., the troops of said State, called out for defense of the United States; and to collect of the United States any money found due from the United States to the State of Pennsylvania.

JNO. W. GEARY, Governor.

Much has been sneeringly said about "Gov. Geary's agent," and many apparently malicious misrepresentations and innuendoes have been based upon this title. But the act of Congress under which this appointment was made required that it be made in this form, and hence it was used. That act is as follows:

AN ACT to indemnify the States for expenses incurred by them in defense of the United States.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That the Secretary of the Treasury be, and he is hereby directed, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, to pay to the Governor of any State, or to his duly authorized agents, the costs, charges, and expenses properly incurred by such State for enrolling, subsisting, clothing, supplying, arming, equipping, paying, and transporting its troops employed in aiding to suppress the present insurrection against the United States, to be settled upon proper vouchers, to be filed and passed upon by the proper accounting officers of the Treasury. Approved July 27, 1861.

Of the claims thus filed by Mr. Evans, he collected as follows:

October 27, 1868	$105,651 46
August 26, 1870	138,846 09
April 11, 1871	137,822 59
May 15, 1871	242,167 57
June 23, 1871	296,753 08
Total	$921,240 79
Add to this	1,989,228 32
Collected out of the claims filed by Col. McMichael, and the total is	$2,910,469 11

The agent made the following dispositions of the money collected:

Quota of State tax	$1,304,711 43
Repaid cash advanced by the United States to the State	606,000 00
Paid into the State Treasury	708,710 77
Retained as his commission of ten per cent for collection	291,046 91
Total	$2,910,469 11

Toward the close of the year 1867 the agent reported his proceedings to the Governor as highly successful, and the Governor, in his annual message to the Legislature of 1868, alluded to the subject as follows:

"The balance in favor of the General Government for Pennsylvania's quota of the direct tax, levied in the several States for war purposes, and for cash from the United States, amounting in all to nearly $2,000,000, has been settled in full by the allowance of claims for extraordinary expenses incurred by the State during the war.

"In consequence of the lapse of time since the remaining claims were contracted, the want of sufficient vouchers and explanations, and the difficulty of finding the parties, some of them being dead, by whom they should be made, render their settlement difficult, and in many instances doubtful, the accomplishment of which will, however, be vigorously pursued, and the results laid before the Legislature."

After the first one no further report of a formal character was made to the Governor, nor any, it is believed, to either of the accounting officers of the State until that which was presented by the agent to the Governor on July 21 of the present year, and to those officers a few days afterward; and why, it will naturally be asked, this failure to report? The following facts supply the answer to this question:

During the years 1868, '69 and '70 the agent had conversations with the Governor several times respecting the claims of the State. In these interviews he stated the difficulties in the way of establishing the validity of the still unsettled portion of the claims that had been filed by Col. McMichael; that he was doing his utmost to obtain the needed additional proofs, and hoped, with time and patience, to succeed, and when in 1870 he had filed several installments of new claims, amounting in all to $1,058,798 86, previous conversations on the general subject were, in substance repeated, relating to the difficulties experienced in obtaining satisfactory certificates, the necessity of time and earnest effort. As a special reason for not reporting in any public manner to the Executive, and for his refraining from any public allusion to the subject, the agent brought forward the following facts: All the loyal States, he said, had claims against the General Government; the pressure in consequence upon the Federal accounting officers was very great. In view of these facts they had requested him to give no further publicity to his success, as it would only tend to increase the pressure from the other States for the adjustment and payment of their accounts, and that the final settlement of the claims of Pennsylvania would then be embarrassed and delayed. All this seemed both reasonable and true; and the Governor at that time, having had no cause to doubt the veracity or to question the fidelity of the agent, accepted as satisfactory his representations.

The agent failed to perform his agreement in not paying over "forthwith" to the State Treasurer all the moneys he collected. May, 2, 1867, he received $78,516 89; Oct. 28, 1868, he received $105,651 46; Aug. 26, 1870, he received $136,846 09. The Federal accounting officers, regarding the agent's commission as a power of attorney, accepted his indorsements of drafts for money allowed to the State in their settlement with him. The three foregoing sums the agent retained as payment of the percentage he claimed, and concealed the fact from Gov. Geary and the accounting officers of the State. How could he have done so, the reader will inquire, and that for so long a period? The circumstances which suggest a satisfactory answer are these: The agent, prior to his appointment, had filled important positions in the business community, and had always been regarded as a gentleman of integrity. His application for the agency was supported by a thoroughly competent indorsement. His superior qualifications for the business which the State had placed in his hands had been manifested in the success of his efforts in this work. The verbal reports of his proceedings, from time to time, had been such as were calculated to inspire confidence. Is it a matter of surprise, therefore, that under these circumstances the State authorities were deceived? In many similar cases have the wisest and best of men been deceived by reasons far less forcible and convincing. Much ado has been made about the indorsement of the drafts for the money allowed to the State. It was first asserted that Gov. Geary had indorsed them all, and must therefore have known that the agent had in his possession the three for which he had failed to give any account. This, however was soon found to be incorrect. The real truth is that the Governor never saw nor signed any of the drafts except the one for $296,753 08, dated June 23, 1871. This was received by the agent at Washington June 23, placed in the hands of the Governor in the City of New-York the 26th of the same month, and was deposited by him in the State Treasury on Monday the 28th. As soon as any trustworthy rumors reached the ear of Gov. Geary that the agent had exceeded the bounds of his authority, and this probably to the prejudice of the interests of the State, he addressed to Attorney-General Browster the following communication:

EXECUTIVE CHAMBER, HARRISBURG, Aug. 10, 1871.

To the Hon. F. CARROLL BREWSTER, *Attorney-General.*

MY DEAR SIR: The accounts of Geo. O. Evans, esq., the special agent for the settlement of the war claims of Pennsylvania against the United States, are reported to be in a very unsatisfactory condition, and, as it is indispensably necessary that the whole matter should be investigated, I therefore call upon you, as the legal officer of the State, to give it your earliest and most earnest attention. JNO. W. GEARY.

The Attorney-General has instituted the necessary legal proceedings, both civil and criminal, and the courts in which they are to be tried will require the agent to give bail in a sum sufficient to cover the claim of the State, and deal impartial justice to all parties concerned. No one is surprised that in a matter of this kind the Democratic newspapers should endeavor to implicate all the branches of the State Administration, but the course of certain so-called Republican journals that have labored to screen all other officials, and lay the whole burden of blame upon the Governor, throwing out against him the basest insinuations, is of all honorable men an occasion of surprise, indignation, and regret.

This letter is already too long, but I cannot close without inviting special attention to the following facts and circumstances, as herein disclosed: (1.) That the reports, agreement, and bond exacted of the agent, though not required by the law, were evidently intended to supply manifest defects in the joint resolution, and thereby protect the interests of the State. (2.) The only question in dispute, so far as the State Treasury is concerned, is whether the agent shall receive ten per cent for his compensation, the maximum authorized by the joint resolution. (3.) Is not the reference in the Annual Message of 1868 proof of candid and honest action and intention? and is not the subsequent silence satisfactorily explained? (4.) Was not Evans "the agent of Gov. Geary" under the act of Congress authorizing his appointment? and, if so, where is the criminality in that fact, or in calling him such? (5.) The Governor never saw or handled any of the money or drafts except one, and that one he paid in full into the State Treasury the second day after he received it. (6.) It is clear from the official certificates, all newspaper allegations to the contrary notw