THE MEMPHIS DAILY APPEAL.

BY M'CLANAHAN, TROUSDALE & DILL. MEMPHIS, FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 1859. VOLUME X.—NUMBER 147.

Daily Appeal.

LETTER FROM HON. GEORGE W. JONES,

OF TENNESSEE.

To the Democratic State Central Committee.

Expenditures of Government from 1847, to July 1859. The cause of the increase, and what Party is Responsible for it.

When I entered Congress in 1843, the current annual expenditures of the General Government, exclusive of payments on the public debt and trust funds, were only twenty-one millions of dollars. In the year 1846-7, during the Mexican war, the expenditures went up to the sum of $33,821,569.37. In 1849-50, after the close of the war, the expenditures were reduced to $37,160,906.09. The next year they went up to $44,049,949.48. The next year, down again to $40,289,954.36. Again, in the next year, 1852-3, up to the sum of $44,178,185.36, and since that there has been a constant regular increase of from four to six millions a year, until the expenditures of the United States have reach the enormous amount of from seventy-five to eighty millions of dollars each year. How has this been effected, and who are responsible for it? My opinion is that both parties and all parties, to some extent are responsible for it; and certainly the majority of the Opposition cannot relieve themselves and their party from their full share of the responsibility, for it is a fact patent to the whole world, that the Opposition as a party, under whatever name or flag they do battle, vote freely for liberal appropriations and hence authorize large expenditures.

When the Democratic party in 1846, passed the tariff of that year, the opposition to that wise and salutary measure predicted with seeming confidence, that in practice it would prove a failure, as a revenue measure, and was designed to bring ruin to the domestic manufactures of the country, bankruptcy to the government, and disgrace and overthrow to the Democratic party, which passed and had staked its reputation and future success upon it. Always sanguine, never were individuals or a party more mistaken in the success and results of a measure, than were the opponents of the tariff of 1846. The friends of the measure were equally disappointed in the amount of revenue which poured into the treasury of the United States under its operations.

The amount of revenue received far exceeded the amount anticipated or even desired by those who supported that measure. And the fact of the large and unexpected amounts of revenue which were constantly flowing into the treasury, in connection with the general and unprecedented prosperity which pervaded the whole country and was felt by all branches of business, and the spirit of Young America which reigned supreme, induced individuals and parties to direct their eyes, hearts and efforts to the heaps on heaps of treasure which lay exposed in the Uncle Sam's strong box. Hence various and many were the schemes which were devised for depleting that good old gentleman's resources, and relieving him of his burdens. Almost everybody's pay was increased directly or indirectly. A new department of the Interior has been created and established, making seven Cabinet officers, whose salaries have been increased from six thousand *eight thousand dollars each a year.* The compensation of all clerks and other subordinate employees in the executive departments at Washington have been materially increased. The compensation of the members of Congress was about doubled by the act of 1856. The number of officers and others employed about the capitol has been greatly augmented and their compensation very much increased. The salaries of the Judges of the Supreme and District courts of the United States greatly increased—some cases almost doubled. The salaries of our Ministers and Representatives at foreign courts greatly increased, as well as the number. The compensation to Consuls, which in most cases were paid fees as required by their services, in the shape of fees, was by the acts of March, 1855, and August, 1856, changed, and most of them made salaried officers and are paid now out of the treasury of the United States. In fact, the Government has been on a decidedly fast line since about the year 1849-50. Offices and places have been created, salaries and compensations increased and appointments made in its employment increased and made adequate to their wants and equal to the ability of the government. The army has been increased, and the pay of the officers and men, that of the rank and file largely increased. The navy has been increased in ships and men. Post routes at home and ocean mail steamships to foreign countries have been established.

In addition to the foregoing, sites for the erection of custom houses, court houses, post offices and other public buildings, and public buildings in Territories, have been purchased and the buildings authorized at the cost of millions, and far beyond the necessities or wants of the country, and to the extent of expenditure of millions. Then there is the capital extension, the patent office extension, the extension of the post office building, the extension of the treasury buildings, the cost of the house system and the soldier's home in the District of Columbia, all to be added to the list, which of themselves have been and will be the cause of the expenditure of many millions more. All these things have been done, and done by the Congress of the United States.

I believe the fact may be confidently assumed, without the fear of contradiction, that the party that is a very large majority of the cause and acts of Congress which have so materially increased the expenditures of the General Government since the expiration of Mr. Polk's administration, in March 1849, they have been supported by a majority of the Opposition in Congress. In some cases out of ten, in which yeas and nays were called, I doubt not, the majority of the Opposition will be found to have recorded their votes in the affirmative.

But you wish to know more specifically, some of the particular laws and measures authorizing and requiring the executive branch of the government to expend the large amounts of money, which so horribly the cause economy of the Opposition party. For, rely upon it, if they succeed and get hold of the purse strings of the people there will be no such word as economy in all their dictionary.

Well, in 1845, an act was passed to reduce the postage, under the plausible, but not very well founded assumption that a reduction of the rates of postage would greatly stimulate and increase correspondence, and that the revenue of that branch of public service would be augmented, instead of diminished, and that it would be self-sustaining, that is, that the amount received for postage under the new rates of postage would be sufficient to pay all the costs of transportation of the mails, the postmasters' commissions, and all the other expenses of the Post Office Department. The rates of postage were again modified in 1851, and in 1855 the postage on letters in the postage stamps established by act of Congress, and pre-payment required. Under this scale of things while has been the result? The aggregate amount of postage received has very considerably increased, and I am by no means prepared to say that it is not sufficient to afford all the actually required mail facilities of the country, but falling far short of the amount required to pay for the exorbitant service required by act of Congress.

How do the receipts of the Post Office Department compare at this time, with its expenditures?

At the recent session of Congress the estimates of the receipts from postage—from revenue unalienable to the Post Office Department—for the ensuing July 1, 1859, and June 30, 1860 ..... $7,341,000

Expenditures of the same period, as reported to be required for the service of the fiscal year ending June 30, 1860, by the Postmaster General and post officers $12,922,000

For printing, now estimated separately 15,000

Mail steamer transportation to foreign countries, not included 1,050,000

The appropriation asked for $7,207,000

And expending the money received—some of it—in the Department by the way of the Treasury $29,500,000

Which, of course, must be paid by appropriations made from the Treasury, and will be a permanent annual charge upon it, so long as this state of things shall continue. Who is responsible for this increased burden upon the whole people?—certainly not the Democratic party. The Democratic party resisted the measures which have resulted thus, are members of that party. While it is well known that almost the entire Opposition have been united in support of these measures. And who, at the late session of Congress defeated the Post Office Appropriation bill, rather than consider and pass upon an amendment proposed by the Senate to that bill, for an increase of the rates of letter postage, in the House of Representatives? The Opposition mainly.

The Civil and Diplomatic Appropriation bill which passed at the session of 1849-50, contained a clause "for the extension of the capitol, according to such plan as may be approved by the President of the United States, one hundred thousand dollars; to be expended under his direction, by such architect as he may appoint to execute the same." It also contained a clause appropriating the sum of five hundred dollars, to enable the Secretary of War to make examinations and surveys necessary to determine the best mode of supplying the city of Washington with pure water. This bill, besides the necessary appropriations for the civil and diplomatic service of the Government, was made at that time by a committee composed of a majority of the Opposition in Congress. In some cases out of ten, in which yeas and nays were called, I doubt not, the majority of the Opposition will be found to have recorded their votes in the affirmative.

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For printing, now estimated separately 15,000

Mail steamer transportation to foreign countries, not included 1,050,000

The appropriation asked for $27