# The Jeffersonian Democrat.

J. O. CONVERSE, Proprietor.] A Weekly Newspaper, Devoted to the Dissemination of Republican Principles, Education, Temperance, Literature, Agriculture, and the News of the Day. TERMS---$1,50 per Annum.

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October 28th, 1857. 408 tf

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## THE GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE

FELLOW CITIZENS OF THE SENATE AND OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES:—

At the commencement of your regular session a year ago, I transmitted to you in obedience to the Constitution, a full exposition of the general condition of the State, together with such recommendations in respect to legislation, as the public good seemed to me to require.

In that communication I endeavored to set in a clear light the industrial progress, the material resources and the financial strength of our great commonwealth. It seems not inappropriate, now, before proceeding to more special statements and particular suggestions, to submit to you some general views of our social condition, as affected by other elements than those to which I then invited your attention.

SOCIAL CONDITION.

Seventy-one years ago what is now Ohio was an unbroken wilderness. Seventy years ago the work of American civilization within her limits was just begun by the settlements at Marietta and Cincinnati. Fifty-four years ago she became a State of the American Union. Her subsequent social progress has been a sublime triumph. To-day a powerful commonwealth, numbering nearly two millions and a half of people, exists upon her soil, with unsurpassed energies, resources, agencies of development, and means of happiness. From the eminence already reached we survey, with confident reliance upon the favor of Divine Providence and the inspiration of Free Institutions, the loftier heights yet to be attained.

Prominent among the elements which determine social condition, is the numerical advance or decline of population. The rate and character of this movement, in the absence of a census, must be gathered from the number of marriages, of births, of deaths, of immigrants, of emigrants and of new habitations. For ascertaining the number of these with reasonable certainty, sufficient means are supplied by State and Federal legislation. According to the estimates of the Commissioner of Statistics, the marriages in Ohio during 1858 were 24,000; the deaths 45,000; the births 80,000; the naturalizations 5,000; the new structures 10,000 The increase by births, according to this estimate, is 35,000 annually, and the yearly immigration from foreign countries and other States is estimated to exceed the yearly emigration by 20,000; giving an aggregate increase of 55,000 annually, or 440,000 in eight years. The new structures, allowing six persons for each, indicate nearly the same rate of progress. The population of Ohio in 1850 was 1,980,329, and is now, if the estimate, just referred to, be correct 2,420,329.

The foremost concern of an intelligent and prosperous people is Public Instruction. The mind of every community is the motive power of its advancement; and the measure of its education is practically the measure of production and of all substantial progress. In Ohio, the Constitution wisely requires the General Assembly to secure a thorough and efficient system of Common Schools throughout the State.—The honor of the first act in fulfillment of duty thus enjoined, belongs to the Legislature of 1852 3. That Legislature reorganized Common School Education in Ohio. It does not at all detract from the honor justly due to it, to say that much had been done by previous legislation and the intelligent and zealous labors of the first State Superintendent and the State teachers' Association, to prepare the way for the comprehensive and beneficent measures then adopted under which the Common Schools of Ohio have attained their present state of excellence and usefulness.

A brief comparison between the condition of our Common Schools the year before this enactment and at the present time, will illustrate, in some degree its happy effects.

EDUCATIONAL.

The number of Common Schools in 1853 was 5,984; in 1858, 12,500; the number of youths over five years of age and under twenty-one enumerated in 1853 was 806,782, in 1858, 843,840; the youth enrolled as attending school in 1853, 358,417; in 1858, 609,343; the average number in daily attendance in 1853 was 271,196; in 1858, 355,863; the number of teachers employed in 1853 was 13,564; in 1858, 19,873; the amount paid teachers in 1353 was $800,145,00; in 1858, $1,975,832; the number of school houses in 1853 was 6,850; in 1858, 10,497; the value of school houses in 1853 was estimated at $2,000,000; in 1858, at $3,846,420.

These figures exhibit a gratifying progress; but they by no means furnish a complete view of our educational condition.

There has been a constant and rapid progress which figures cannot measure. The character and condition of our school houses and school rooms has been greatly bettered; the standard of qualification for teachers advanced; the methods of teaching improved; the range and scope of instruction enlarged; and the results, in acquisition and capacity, largely augmented.

A great educational work is prosecuted, also, outside of the Common Schools. The Colleges and Female Seminaries in the State send forth yearly numerous young men and women to take up and carry forward, in its various departments, the work of moral, social and political improvement. During the past year I attended the Commencements of as many of the Colleges as was practicable, and was gratified to observe the marked ability and proficiency displayed by the graduates.

It is to be regretted that the requirements for admission and the course of instruction vary so greatly in these colleges and seminaries; and I would suggest the expediency of establishing by law some classification of these institutions, and some educational standards to which universities, colleges and seminaries shall be required respectively to conform, in the admission, instruction and graduation of students, as conditions of incorporation.

Besides these colleges and seminaries, there are many schools, corresponding in general character with our common schools, but sustained by denominational or private resources, in which a large number of youth receive instruction.

I regret that I have no means of ascertaining the number of these various educational institutions, the number of their teachers, students or pupils; or their schemes of instruction; or their results; and respectfully suggest the expediency of such legislation as will secure the collection of this information, so essential to a full understanding of the condition of our population in this important respect.

It will not escape your observation that, while the actual progress and condition of our Common Schools may well gratify and encourage the friends of popular education, there yet remains a work to be accomplished which imposes grave responsibilities and must needs excite earnest solicitude. The whole number of youth of the school age, as has been already stated, is 843,540, while the number enrolled is 609,343, making the number not enrolled 234,497. The disparity between the whole number and the number, 355,863, in daily attendance, is more striking. The difference is 485,977. Making every allowance for the number taught in private or denominational schools, there must still remain a considerable number who attend no school at all, while of those who do not absent themselves altogether, a very large proportion attend so irregularly or for such brief periods that they derive little benefit from it.

Next to this absenteeism, the most serious hindrance to the prosperity of the Common Schools is the want of a sufficient number of well qualified teachers. Not a few indeed of our teachers possess eminent qualifications for their responsible office. To such we owe not only many excellent district schools, but also the High Schools which adorn many of our cities and towns, and afford opportunities for education which would have been sought in vain a few years ago in most of our Academies and Colleges. A very large number, however, are extremely deficient both in knowledge and in that ability to teach which mere knowledge can never give.

The correction of these evils, so far as may be practicable, is your duty, and will be, I trust, your pleasure and your honorable distinction.

The best means, in my judgment of securing an adequate number of good teachers, are the establishment of Normal Schools and the encouragement of Teachers' Institutes. I ventured to suggest last year the organization of a Normal Department in one or both our State Universities. More immediate and perhaps more valuable results would probably be obtained from the establishment of three or four Normal School in different districts of the State, giving the preference within each district to the city or town which would provide the best buildings for the purpose without cost to the State. Provision has already been made by law for the encouragement of Teachers' Institutes, but it is uncertain and inadequate. I recommend the direct appropriation of an adequate sum to be paid, on compliance with proper conditions, upon the certificate of the State Commissioner.

The indispensable necessity of securing general, regular and continued attendance in school is universally acknowledged. Without this the great object of the common schools, namely, a good education for every child in the State, fails of accomplishment. The Federal Census of 1850 exhibited the fact that over thirty-five thousand persons in Ohio, twenty years old and upward, were unable to read or write. This number was about one in seventeen of all the people of the same age. If we reflect that besides these totally illiterate persons, there is a large number whose education hardly raises them to a higher level, we shall attain some just conception of the importance of adequate provision for universal attendance.—We must not be satisfied while one person capable of instruction remains untaught or ill taught. No means seem better adapted to secure attendance, awaken interest and quicken effort in the attainment of knowledge than frequent visits, addresses and conversations by properly qualified officers of the State. The law recognizes the value of this agency in requiring the State Commissioner to devote a portion of his time to such labors. But it is obvious that the thorough discharge of the other duties imposed on him is quite incompatible with efficient labors of this kind. I suggest, therefore, that he be authorized to employ one or more competent agents to visit every township and urge upon parents, teachers and children, the duties essential to the highest efficiency of our schools. This plan has been adopted elsewhere with the happiest effects. If adopted here, we need not fear the disclosures of any future census; or doubt that our system of Common Schools, already regarded as a model for imitation by other States, will vindicate, by perfect success, its claims to admiration and honor.

While we may reasonably hope that the illiterate as a class will soon disappear from our society, no such pleasing expectation can be indulged in respect to that large portion of the community whom defect and disease in mental or physical organization render proper objects of public care, and whose number and relation to society constitute another element of our social condition, which must engage your notice.

BENEVOLENT ASYLUMS.

The benevolence of the State has already provided three Asylums for the Insane, which have cost for grounds and construction about $474,000, and are sustained at an annual expense of $90,000, excluding charges properly belonging to the account of construction and interest. The cost of the Northern and Central Asylums has been about $153,000 each, that of the Southern about $168,000. The actual value of the Central Asylum is now probably more than double that of either of the others.

In these Asylums there were at the beginning of the last year, 568 inmates; and there were received during the year 414, making the whole number of participants in their benefits 982; there were discharged 412; there died 43; and there remained at the commencement of the current year 570. Of those discharged, 240 had been restored to sanity, and 35 decidedly improved. The average expense of each inmate was about $158.

The Central Asylum will accommodate 250 inmates, the Northern 150, and the Southern 160. Each has been filled to the extent of its capacity. Another Asylum is in progress of construction in Hamilton co., for the reception of the Insane of that Co only. After its completion and opening, the County will constitute the South-Western Asylum District.

The number of insane in Ohio, according to the census of 1850 was 1,303. This number was doubtless understated. I am satisfied that the present number is not less than two thousand. The Superintendent of the Central Asylum thinks it does not fall short of three thousand. The arguments which establish the duty of some provision for some of the insane, requires doubtless adequate provision for all. Several plans for such provision have been suggested. One contemplates the enlargement of one or more of the existing Asylums; another proposes to provide for the support and treatment of the insane in the County Infirmaries; while a third, not necessarily excluding the others, suggests the enactment of a law for the establishment and regulation of private Asylums, in which a large portion of the Insane would be provided for by their friends without charge to the State. I have no hesitation in recommending the legislation contemplated by this latter suggestion. The information necessary to a well grounded choice between the other plans is not yet accessible. My impression is that the first will prove most economical and most beneficent; if indeed, after the completion of the South-Western Asylum and the enactment of a judicious law for Private Asylums either shall be found necessary.

The condition of the Idiotic, equally with that of the Insane, must engage the attention of the philanthropist and statesman.—A few years ago this hapless class seemed beyond reach of effectual relief. Recently, however, attempts to rescue them from their apparently hopeless condition, have been crowned by results which inspire hope and encourage perseverance. The judicious humanity of the last General Assembly inaugurated a systematic plan for their instruction and improvement, which has been so far executed under your auspices, that ultimate success is no longer doubtful. It is not, indeed, to be expected that the idiotic can be elevated to any high degree of capacity; but very many of them can be qualified to earn their own subsistence, and nearly all can be trained to habits of neatness and propriety. The whole number of idiots in the State is reasonably estimated at about 2,000. Of these, 500 are of a proper age to receive instruction. In the Asylum recently opened for their reception, there were, at the commencement of the present year, 16; 22; there were received during the present year 26; there were discharged 6; there are absent 6: the number under instruction at the commencement of the present year, was 26; the average number maintained at the State's expense, 20. The expense of the year, excluding the cost of permanent improvements had been $3,845 67. The average annual expense of each pupil was $192. When the institution is full, the annual expense of each pupil will be of course less, and will not exceed the average cost at the other Asylums. The question of the permanent establishment and location of the Institution should be promptly decided. If decided affirmatively, provision should be made for the purchase, either of the property in which it is temporarily established, or of some other site. After careful consideration of all circumstances, I think it my duty to recommend the first of these alternatives as most judicious and most economical.

Deaf mutes constitute another class for whose education public provision must necessarily be made. To our State belongs the honor of first recognizing this principle; and nearly thirty years have now elapsed since her Asylum was first opened to these unfortunates. The number now in the State is estimated at 1,200. Of these, more than one-third have received instruction in the Asylum, and probably another third are of suitable age for admission. Of this latter number 150 are in actual enjoyment of its benefits, while 250 are necessarily excluded. The number admitted during the year was 35, and the same number was discharged. The expenses of the Institution paid by the State during the last year were $21 177 94. The average cost of each inmate was $141. The importance of adding to the instruction in this Asylum, proper training for some industrial occupation, as well as the necessity of some further provision for those whom its limited capacities exclude from admission, will doubtless engage your serious consideration.

Another class whose situation enlists the warmest sympathies of every feeling heart, and invokes irresistibly the provident benevolence of the State, is the Blind. The total number of this class is estimated to be 840. Of this number 200 are of proper and legal age for admission to the Asylum. Of these about 60 have either already received its benefits, or are thought by their friends too young to be sent to it; leaving 140 who should be under instruction. There were in the Asylum last year 100; there were admitted or re-admitted during the year 28; the whole number under its instruction up to its close was 105. The average number in daily attendance was 94.—The expenses, excluding $5,500 for permanent improvements, were $13,387,95, showing an average outlay for each inmate of near $142.

It thus appears that the whole number of persons rendered infirm and dependent by defective or diseased organization is 6,040, that of those 3,040 are in conditions requiring provision for them in public or private institutions; that 847 are actually in the State Asylums, leaving two thousand one hundred and ninety three unprovided for, except so far as they may find relief in Co. Infirmaries or private families; that the average number constantly in the Asylums through the last year was 834; that the total cost to the State of their maintenance during the year was $128,410; that the cost of each inmate for the year was $154; that to provide for those needing, but not now receiving the benefits of the Asylums, at the same rate, would require an annual additional expenditure of $337,522, making an aggregate annual outlay of $466,932, and that these estimates are exclusive of interest, about $36,000 on the capital, about $600,000 invested in the existing Asylums, and of the yearly cost of permanent improvements, which was last year about $3,800; and the capital yet to be invested in new sites and structures, and of the interest upon that.

No one desires more earnestly than I do that the General Assembly may fully discharge the obligations assumed in the Constitution by the whole people, to the children of sorrow. The duty of fulfilling them is clear, and the benefits of its performance evident. The social condition of no people can be what it should be, while a class of guiltless and helpless victims of physical or mental disorder remains unrelieved. Nor is the duty of relief less imperatively dictated by considerations of economy, than by considerations of philanthrophy. The dependent infirm must be sustained by society in some form. The only choice is between modes. And how much better that mode which raises so many of them from depths of helplessness and wretchedness, and makes them self-supporting and even useful members of the community, than that other mode which wastes resources in futile and inadequate relief, drops its wretched objects in their sorest need, and inflicts upon society the moral and social evils necessarily resulting from the presence of such a class neglected in its midst.

The statements I have submitted are designed to set clearly before you the nature and magnitude of the evil, for which you are called upon to provide a remedy. They will, perhaps, convince you of the necessity of restoring the policy adopted at the opening, and pursued for twelve years in the administration of the Asylums, of requiring that the cost of maintenance in them be defrayed by the parents or guardians of the inmates, in cases where the circumstances of the parties fully justify it. They will, I think, also satisfy you of the expediency of encouragement, by law, of the establishment of private infirmaries and asylums, in which there is reason to believe many will be maintained by their own means or by relatives and friends, and that others, needing help from the State, can, in many cases, be provided for at much less than the present cost. They will also, it may be hoped, recommend to all entrusted with the administration of these institutions, the duties of economy in expenditure and vigilance.

Many individuals of these classes partially provided for in the State Asylums, are inmates of the County Infirmaries. This fact imparts additional force to the general considerations which suggest further legislation for the regulation of these Institutions. I regret that the Commissioner appointed under the act of your predecessors to examine the reports required by it, and prepare a bill for the better endowment, regulation and management of Infirmaries, has as yet been unable to fulfill the duty imposed by his appointment. I trust, however, that the preparation of a proper bill, and the necessary legislative action upon it will not be long delayed.

PAUPERISM.

Another important element, entering into every adequate estimate of social condition, is that of Pauperism. In Ohio the pauper class is less numerous than in many other States; but is yet large enough to require thoughtful consideration. The number of poor, well or ill provided for, either temporarily or permanently, in Infirmaries, Houses of Refuge, or other institutions, is estimated at 2,800, and the number of the same class receiving out-door relief, at 12,000, making the total number of poor supported wholly or partially by the public during the year, 14,800. Estimating the population of the State to be 2,400,000, the proportion of paupers is 1 in 162. The proportion of the same class in England is 1 in 12; in New York, according to the census in 1850, it was 1 in 50; in Massachusetts 1 in 65. For the prevention of its increase in Ohio, we must rely on the aid of Education, upon the influence of Religion, and upon equal laws, securing to labor its just share of production. There is no reason to expect, however, that the poor will ever cease out of the land.—Hereafter, as heretofore, it will be the duty of States and individuals to open wide the hand to the needy. Let us hope that our State, so honorably distinguished for her Institutions of Benevolence, will never fail in the just performance of it.

To ascertain the entire number of the dependent classes, it will be proper to add to the number of the Insane and otherwise naturally inform 6,040, and to the number of paupers, 14,800, the average number daily in confinement under charge or sentence for crime, estimated at 11,400; making the whole number of persons to be maintained wholly, or in part from public revenues or by private aid, 32,240.

This aggregate includes all the Insane, the Idiotic, the Deaf and Dumb, the Blind, the in-door and out-door paupers, and the imprisoned. The whole mass may become at any time what much the larger portion is at all times, a charge upon the State. It is what may be justly called the infirm element of society. Its proportion to the whole constitutes an important indication of the whole constitutes, an important indication of the moral and industrial condition of a State. That proportion in Ohio as 1 to 75; in Massachusetts as 1 to 41; in New York as 1 to 20.

CRIME.

Under the general name of crime, as an element of social condition, may be comprehended all action, associated or individual, which, violating moral obligation, inflicts injury on persons or society. What I have to submit to you relating to crime in our own State, will, however, be confined to offences against penal laws and their regarding influences on the otherwise healthful and regular progress of society. The number of indictments for crime during the past year was about 3,600; the number of police arrests for crimes against the State not prosecuted by indictment, was about 3,200; the number of arrests for offences 4,686; making the number of arrests for crimes and offences of lower grade 11,486. The convictions carried into judgment, upon indictment, were 1,300. The murders during the year were 80, and the suicides 65. The proportion of crimes and offences to the population was 1 in 208; the proportion of offenders being of course somewhat less. The proportion or murders was 1 to 30,000; that of suicides 1 to 36,923.

The infrequency of convictions as compared with indictments will doubtless attract your attention. It indicates a defective administration of criminal justice, to be remedied not so much legislation, as by increased vigilance and firmness on the part of those to whom that administration is committed It is worthy your consideration, however, whether upon convictions for murder in the first degree, it may not be expedient to authorize the courts to sentence at discretion to capital punishment or imprisonment for life. I am persuaded that, in many instances, murder escapes all punishment, through the reluctance of juries to find verdicts which must necessarily be followed by sentence of death.

It is well ascertained that of crimes of violence, nearly one-half have their immediate origin in intemperance, and that more than four-fifths of the police offence, are due to the same baneful cause. It is the abundant source of pauperism, lunacy, and disease, as well as of crime. Its cost to society is beyond the power of computation, and its multiform influences of evil beyond the reach of estimate. I again invoke your attention to this vitally important subject, and trust that your action in regard to it may be wise and efficient.

In this connection I think it my duty to recommend to you the establishment of an Asylum for Inebriates. Much evil to individuals and society may be averted, and much positive good accomplished, by means of such an Institution. It established on the State Reform Farm, upon a judicious plan and scale, its cost need not be great.

JUDICATURE.

The administration of civil not less than that of criminal justice, is intimately related to social condition and advancement. When cheap, prompt, unbiased and sure, it guaranties industry, promotes enterprise, and ensures progress. When dear, dilatory, partial and uncertain, it imporverishes labor, discourages useful undertakings and introduces decline. In this State the people elect their Judges, and thus directly determine, in large measure, the character of judicial administration. The results thus far, especially in civil justice, have not disappointed the advocates of an elective judiciary. Incompetent judges have, it is true, been sometimes elected, and the evils of mal-administration have been sometimes felt; but the Courts of Ohio, considered in general, have nothing to apprehend from a comparison with those of any other State in respect to intelligence, learning or efficiency. The amount of their labors may be inferred from the act that the number of civil suits last year was about 30,000, in 18,000 of which judgements were rendered. The number of suits involving serious controversy of law or fact bore, however, a small portion to the whole. Much the larger number were prosecutions for the collection of claims, and it is estimated that nine-tenths in amount of the debts unsecured by mortgage or otherwise, which class constituted three-fourths of the whole, was recovered or is recoverable. The estimate, if at all reliable, indicates plainly the grounds on which the high credit of the business men, as well as of the State of Ohio, is established. The whole debt of her people, public and private, as I took occasion to show last year, is hardly equal in amount to one-fifth of the property in the State, and the loss by individual failure in payment, is only two and a half per cent. of the debt. The rate of commercial hazard in credits, is therefore, comparatively insignificant.

Such is the social condition of State, contemplated in some of its most important and interesting aspects. The sketch is necessarily imperfect, for the materials are inadequate. It may not however, be altogether without value, while the provision judiciously made by you, and the preceding General Assembly for a more ample collection of statistical information will supply, hereafter, the means of more certain and more useful comparisons and deductions, than are possible now.

Passing from these general views to other topics of perhaps more immediate concern, permit me to invite your attention, in the first place, to our financial condition.

The Constitution requires that all property, of whatever discription, and by whomsoever held, shall be listed for taxation at its true value. The Revenues of the State, the Counties, the Townships, the Cities, Villages and the School Districts, are raised by rates levied, if for State purposes, on the whole property listed, and if for local purposes, on the property listed within the proper territorial limits. The school laws of various years, but particularly of 1853 and 1854; the road and bridge laws of 1854, and other years; the poorhouse act of 1831; one act of 1857; two of 1858, and some other acts of less importance, prescribe the rates of taxation.

The School acts direct the levy of one mill and six tenths on each dollar of valuation throughout the State, for general school and library purposes, and of various rates to be fixed by the local authorities, for local purposes, such as the construction of school houses and the purchase of sites.

The Road and Bridge laws authorize rates for the objects indicated by their titles, varying from the twenty-fifth of a mill to nine and a half mills, to be determined by the County Commissioners, and an additional rate, not over six mills, to be levied by the County Auditor, on property adjoining roads within certain limits on the petition of property holders.

The poor house act of 1831, authorizes the levy by the County Commissioners of an indefinite rate for the erection of Infirmaries, and a rate not exceeding one mill for the support of the poor

The act of 1857, requires the levy of seven-tenths of a mill for general State purposes; of nine-tenths of a mill for payment of interest and principal of the public debt; of rates for county purposes, within various limits from two to four miles, to be determined by the County Comissioners, will liberty to the Commissioners of Counties whose taxable values do not exceed $3,000,000, to levy higher rates; of rates for Township purposes to be fixed by Township Trustees, but not to exceed one mill on the first $2,000,000 of valuation, and one-fourth of a mill on the excess; of rates not exceeding four mills, for city and village purposes, to be fixed by the authorities, and of a rate not exceeding six mills, to be fixed by the City Council of Cincinnati.

The acts of 1858, require the Auditor of State to increase the levy for the payment of the State Debt, whenever it may be necessary, in order to make the Sinking Fund equal in amount to the requirements of the Constitution and the laws, and direct the levy of seven-twentieths of a mill in each of the years 1858, 1859 and 1860, to provide means for the payment of the loan of $700,000, authorized by the second of these acts, and intended to supply the deficit created by defalcation

It thus appears that the rate of taxation for General Revenue, applicable to the support of the State Government, in all its Departments, Executive, Legislative and Judicial, and the payment of the cost of Public Buildings and the expenses to the Benevolent Institutions, is but 7 9th of the general rate for the public debt; while it sinks almost to insignificance in comparison with the local taxation for County, Township, City, Village and School District purposes.

It would contribute much to a clearer understanding of our revenue system by those entrusted with its administration, as well as by the people at large, if all rates of taxation were prescribed by a single law, and not by many as at present; and I respectfully reccommend the expediency of such an enactment to your consideration.

The receipts of the fiscal year 1858 from taxation, tolls, convicts' earnings, and all other sources of revenue, properly so called, including the premium on the temporary loan, were $2,931,756 17. The receipts from sales of school and ministerial lands and the principal of the temporary loan, and the amount of July interest not called for in New York, and therefore returned to the treasury—all which items constitute debt rather than revenue—were $826,965,40. The total receipts, therefore, were $3,758,721.57. The disbursements $3,515,458.77, to which should be added the excess of the defalcation over former apparent balance, which was $17,143.85, making a total of $3,532,602 62. The balance in the treasury, therefore, at the commencement of the present fiscal year, was $226,118.95.

The levies of each year produce he receipts of the next year. The receipts and disbursements of the current year, therefore, can at present be only estimated; the levies only, which were made in part under the acts of preceding sessions, are certain. The taxes paid, and to be paid, into the Treasury during the current year arise from these levies. Referring you to former communications for information relating to former years I shall state summarily the amount of taxable values, and of taxes levied in 1858. The total number of acres listed for taxation was 25 298 968. The valuation of these lands was $437,183 132; that of Town and City lots, $153,102 815; that of chattels $250,514,084; making the aggregate valuation of all taxable property in the State, $840 800 031. The taxes levied for general State purposes were, for Sinking Fund, $1,047 902; for general State purposes, $587,206; for Common Schools, $1,259 092; for District School Libraries, $83,920; in all $2 978,122 The levies for County purposes were, for County expenses, $1,130 939; for Bridges, $351,888; for the Poor, $222,471; for Building, $320,954; for Roads, $350 504 35; for Railroads, $462 430; in all $2,849 220. The levies for Township, City and other local purposes, were, for Township expences, $284 051; for schools and school houses, $1,438,811; for City, Town and other special taxes, $1,633 816; making a total for Township and City taxes of $3,356,678; to which add for delinquencies and forfeitures, $572,630; making the aggregate of County and other local taxes of $6,778,528.

A slight degree of attention to existing taxation shows a new levy of a fraction of a mill cannot be of much consequence. The levy for school libraries is $83,920; yet the rate is but one tenth of a mill. It is the aggregate of such rates, which, considered separately and without reference to the sums produced, seems so incons derable, that constitutes the total burden of taxation.

A large proportion of all the public income is expended directly for the common good. The levies for schools, school houses and libraries amount, for example, to $2,781,822, or nearly one-third of the taxes in all forms and for all purposes. To taxation for these and similar purposes, the proceeds being honestly and economically applied, the people cheerful consent. They murmur, and justly murmur, when their burdens are augmented beyond the proportion of benefits by improvidence, waste or peculation. For the prevention of these evils the people must look to County Commissioners, Township Trustees, Boards of Education, and City and Village Councils, even more than to the General Assembly. It cannot be too deply impressed upon the public mind that the discretion committed to these local authorities, however limited and guarded, must be necessarily large, and that, in respect to the imposition of far the largest proportion of taxes, they constitute the real legislatures. Too much care cannot be exercised in the choice of citizens to fill these important positions.

To ensure the safest and most beneficial workings of our financial system, it seems desirable that assessment, levy, collection and disbursement be brought as closely together as possible. I can see no good reason why assessments may not be made and equalized, levies determined and duplicates prepared, during the last quarter of each fiscal year. This would bring levies into close proximity to collections, and ensure the most exact proportion possible between values and taxes. Nor do I perceive why County Treasurers collecting revenue for the State should not be required to report their collections at brief intervals, in the same manner as the collectors on the canals, and hold them subject to the draft of the Comptroller, or why their final settlements with the State Treasurer should be delayed to the late day now assigned by law.

Each year's income should, as nearly as practicable, pay each year's expenses, and no money should remain in the Treasury except what is needed for current disbursements. The act passed at your late session, providing for the semi-annual collection of taxes, was, in my judgment, a wise step in the right direction, and I am glad to know, has given general satisfaction in its practical operation. The act authorizing drafts by the Comptroller upon the County Treasurers, for the taxes collected in December, just past, in order to their application to payment of the interest due on the first of the current month, was another step towards the same end.

Justly obnoxious to censure as was the practice of collecting from the County Treasurers by similar drafts in advance of their regular settlements, large sums to be added to large balances already in the Treasury, or to supply the place of large balances fraudulently abstracted, it can now hardly admit of question that our safest future policy will be to pay our January interest from December, and our July interest from June collections. As far as possible, also, the expenses of the first two quarters of each fiscal year should be defrayed from the former, and those of the two last quarters from the latter collections. I recommend such legislation as may be deemed necessary to give practical effect to these suggestions by providing for the prompt payment into the State Treasury of the State's proportion of taxes as soon as collected, and requiring earlier settlements by the County Treasurers with the State Treasurer. Such legislation would enable the Auditor of State to lay before the General Assembly, at an early day in each session, a statement of the actual receipts from taxes in December, and the estimated receipts in June, as well as of the actual and estimated receipts from all other sources during the year, and this statement would supply a basis for economical and intelligent appropriations for the ensuing three-quarters of the current and the first quarter of the next fiscal year.

A judicious law prescribing rates of levy will tend to ensure moderation in taxation; the payment of current expenses from current income will prevent the evils of accumulation in the Treasury; the restriction of appropriations to actual receipts, and of expenditures to appropriations, will restrain, the former legislative, and the latter administrative extravagance. These, in my judgment, are the essentials of a good financial system.

Under such a system the custody of the public revenue would involve *far less hazard* than heretofore. Still, under any system, while collections from taxes for all purposes, State and Local, cannot be expected soon to fall below four millions, and may exceed, as in 1854 and in the present year, four millions and a half semi-annually, of which a moiety will not be required for disbursement until some time after collection; and a portion will remain for six months or more, the point of custody will remain one of great importance.

The safe keeping of the public money, therefore, properly engaged a large share of the attention of your immediate predecessors, as well as of your own. The chief essential point of difference between the modes adopted seems to be that the latter, while requiring ample securities from depositaries for payment on demand, did not contemplate the withdrawal of the moneys deposited from the transaction of business, until wanted for public purposes, while the latter seems to intend the actual keeping of the public moneys in the hands of the State and County Treasurers until required for disbursement in discharge of public obligations. If the safety of the public moneys is equally insured by either mode, the former appears to be entitled to preference; for money is machinery, whose work is exchange, and it is obvious that the withdrawal from use of considerable sums for considerable periods must in some measure interrupt and embarrass the operations of business. But safety is the paramount consideration, and no mode of custody is admissable which does not secure it as far as it can be secured in any mode.

THE SUB-TREASURY.

In a former communication I thought it my duty to recommend to your consideration a plan for the safe-keeping and disbursement of the public moneys, which seemed to me to combine security with convenience. That plan failed to commend itself to your approval; but you did not omit to establish by law a system of regulations, intended to accomplish the same general purpose. Few measures fulfill perfectly the designs of their authors; and some defects have become apparent in the practical

*(Concluded on the Fourth page.)*