

GLASGOW WEEKLY TIMES.

GREEN & SHIRLEY,

"ERROR CEASES TO BE DANGEROUS, WHEN REASON IS LEFT FREE TO COMBAT IT."—JEFFERSON.

EDITORS & PROPRIETORS.

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GOVERNOR'S MESSAGE.

To the Senate and House of Representatives.

GENTLEMEN: Yours is the fifteenth General Assembly which has convened in our State, and, yet, judging the future by the past, the business of making and changing laws, is, by no means, drawing to a close.

In making this remark it is not intended to convey the idea that there is too much or too little legislation,—that is a matter for your body to determine—but to save the necessity of frequent changes, it is respectfully suggested that great care should be taken in maturing every bill before it is finally enacted. Hasty legislation, except in extreme cases, should be studiously avoided.

Since our State was organized and admitted into the Union, a period of about twenty-eight years has elapsed, and during that time, we have advanced, with strides more or less rapid, in wealth and population; but never before, has our legislature convened under circumstances, except as to increase of population, so flattering, or calling more urgently for thanks and gratitude to our Maker, for the many and great blessings which the country enjoys. These thanks and this gratitude a highly favored people should unite in rendering up to the Giver of all good, and none can do so with stronger convictions of our deep indebtedness than the Executive.

Even in the last four years, our condition has been greatly changed for the better. A kind providence, smiling upon us bountifully, has poured out its choicest blessings from a full cup. When first it fell to my lot to address you as the Executive, the harvests had been destroyed with floods; since then they have been abundant, and now, not only the granaries, but even the barnyards are full; then we imported more and shipped off less; but now we import less and ship off more; then the country was afflicted with disease; now almost universal good health prevails; then, the people, broken down with idleness and extravagance, were sorely pressed with debt; now, through industry, economy and frugality, the great mass have paid their debts, recovered their liberty, and enjoy ease and comfort.

As late as four years ago, many were too indolent to work, or else foolish enough to deem it disreputable; but now, from necessity and the character of the times, almost every man has gone willingly, or been driven to work, and that man might well be considered insane who could look upon honest labor as disreputable. It may now be said in truth; that almost every man is adding to his own and the commonwealth by his industry, economy and frugality. The few remaining, who are not actually laying up for the winter of life, are at least supporting their families and paying old debts, and preparing the way to lay up in future. This change in the character of a large portion of our population is considered one of the most fortunate circumstances of our times. In every age and in all countries, the mass of the population must live by industry and toil; and as only a few can thrive upon their wits, every encouragement should be given to honest industry.

Four years ago, even in our politics, we were split up, divided and confused with improper issues. The old division between whigs and democrats was invaded, and party lines obscured, and party colors mixed and blended together till many had to ask, "where are we?" but now this matter too is changed, and a democrat is a democrat, and a whig is a whig again. These remarks are made in reference to our own State, and never was the democracy here stronger or the party better united. That union is considered the surest harbinger of our continued prosperity. This is said in no disrespect of political adversaries, but in the honest conviction that democratic principles are best calculated to promote the interest and permanent good of the whole people—whigs as well as democrats—and that the union of the democracy is, therefore properly enumerated among the fortunate circumstances surrounding us.

Four years ago, our State was not only in debt, but borrowing money to pay interest upon debts—not collecting revenue enough to meet expenses—now we have ceased to borrow, and are collecting revenue sufficient, not only to meet expenses,

but also to commence paying off outstanding bonds.

Such is part of the history of our condition a few years back; and such is the history of our condition now. The changes have been important and fortunate for us. We owe much to the favor of a kind providence for this improvement in our condition, and much to the fact that we have manfully put our own shoulders to the wheel; something to the distress and misfortunes of other countries, but much to the good health and bountiful harvests of our own; and much more to wise legislation—the freedom of trade.

REVENUE.

Our revenue is in a good condition. The amount received in the last two fiscal years ending the thirtieth of September, 1848, is \$435,643. From this sum however, should be deducted 19,000 dollars borrowed under an act entitled "an act to sustain the credit of the State." This deduction would leave of net revenue for the last two fiscal years 416,643 dollars. The revenue for the two preceding fiscal years was only 330,768 dollars. The two sets of figures, show an increase of revenue in the last two fiscal years of 85,889 dollars. The increase in the year 1839 over that of 1836 is 34,366 dollars, and over the year 1835, 60,127 dollars.

The amount of revenue expended during the same period, including the payment of interest upon the State bonds is about 389,000 dollars, leaving on hand over 27,000 dollars. The revenue for the next two years, will hardly fall short of 420,000 dollars; and the expenses will be only about that of the two last years, say 389,000 dollars, including 142,000 dollars interest upon State Bonds; leaving a surplus to be applied towards the payment of debts, of 31,000 dollars.

These figures show a prosperous condition of our revenue, and if no change is made for the worse, instead of borrowing, as we have heretofore done, to pay interest upon State bonds, we may now commence discharging the debt hanging over the State. In fact the work has already been commenced. Under the act to sustain the credit of the State, the executive was authorized to borrow the sum of 80,000 dollars. Of this sum, the Treasury having been previously exhausted, first, by the session of the convention, and, second, by the session of the Legislature soon afterwards, 19,000 dollars were borrowed and no more; being 61,000 dollars less than the act authorized the Executive to procure. This was not actually paying debts, but it was avoiding the contraction of them, where it had been supposed it might become necessary to contract them. But over and above this, one bond of 20,000 dollars, given to the Branch Bank at Jackson, has been paid off and the bond cancelled and filed in the Auditor's office. This is the commencement of the discharge of our public debt, and is an epoch in the history of our State which deserves to be marked and remembered. We should now congratulate ourselves on having reached the end of our road in extravagance, and for the future we should continue to retrace our steps, never looking back till all our public debts are faithfully discharged, and the State released from the grasp of the bond holders. Every item of revenue, whether small or great, should be carefully saved; and when not needed for other important purposes, should be applied to the payment of outstanding debts.

REPORTS.

The reports of the Auditor and Treasurer, and of the Superintendent of Common Schools, and of the Inspectors of the Penitentiary, will be presented to you at the proper time.

AUDITORS.

In the Auditor's office several changes have taken place since the beginning of my administration—the term of service of the first incumbent expired—the next, the Hon. Wm. Monroe, resigned, and soon after died—and the next, the Hon. James R. McDermott, died while in office. Of these two men, it is right to say, that of their competency and faithfulness, their works are the best evidence. Both were upright, honorable and correct; and each ever seemed unconscious of the extent of his own worth and merit. The loss of these good men has been unfortunate for the country; but, from the examinations, the office appears at each change to have been fortunately filled.

MONEY BORROWED.

The 19,000 dollars worth of bonds—previously alluded to—and sold under the act to sustain the credit of the State, were sold mainly to citizens of the State, and made to bear eight per cent. per annum interest, the lowest rate at which any officers were made to take them. A much larger sum could have been disposed of, had the money been needed for State purposes; but care and economy and improving revenue enabled us to meet our obligations without involving the State to any greater extent.

BORROWING.

If paying debts as they become due, should make the credit of a State good, then ours ought to stand among the foremost in that respect, because she has seldom failed to make arrangements to meet the demands against her; but enviable as may be the position of a State in good credit, it is far better and much more reputable to be wholly out of debt and independent of the world. If a borrowing scene, on a large scale, could be fairly represented, the picture would certainly not meet the approbation of the people of our State. It is hardly possible to conceive a

more humiliating and degrading position for a community of sturdy, industrious, honest and hard-working men. A striking view of this picture might be conceived, if, instead of the agent employed to beg the loan bowing at the feet of a haughty banker, we could imagine one hundred thousand strong, healthy and able-bodied men, such as stood erect against the storms of the late war, bowing in their own proper persons, and presenting their petition, begging the loan of some money. The State, with her assembled population on one side, headed by the bearer of her petition, and the banker, with his money bags on the other, about to receive it, would present a spectacle to be looked at in shame and sorrow and humiliation by the balance of the world. But to the State this would be the least humiliating part of the transaction. The worst would follow. After hearing the petition for a loan, the banker would go, first, into an examination of the character of the State for honesty and punctuality in paying her debts; if he found her inclined to pay then he would examine her means and ability to carry that inclination into effect; if her means were found to be abundant, then he would enquire what provisions had been made by law to raise those means to be applied at the very hour when due in discharge of his claim for interest upon the loan; if the proper provisions were found to have been made to raise the means to pay, then, still suspecting the honesty and punctuality of a borrowing people, he would agree to loan the money only on condition that the State would humble herself still further, by getting some petty and contemptible banking shop—the offspring of some evil hour in her own legislation—to indorse her bonds; and, as the last step in the measure of degradation, when application is made to the bank to indorse for the State that created it, and in fact that mainly owns it, that bank refuses to indorse the bonds, and the humble petitioner fails to get the loan prayed for. Such is a faint picture of a borrowing scene, and if properly understood by the people of this State, one would rarely ever meet their approbation.

BOUNDARY.

The question of boundary between this State and Iowa has at last been placed in a fair way of adjustment. It is now before the Supreme Court of the United States; unless it has already been taken up and disposed of. It was understood to be the first, or one of the first cases to be taken up, after the meeting of the court; if the counsel for the State of Iowa should be ready for the trial. On our part, we have been ready all the time. We have thus a fair prospect of a speedy adjustment of this troublesome question.

DE LISLE CLAIM.

In the DeLisle case, involving the question of title to a portion of the seat of government, a trial was had in the Circuit Court and a decision rendered in favor of the defendant, but a writ of error was taken to the Supreme Court, where, one judge not sitting, the decision of the Circuit Court was affirmed, the two remaining judges dividing in opinion. The case will probably be taken to the Supreme Court of the United States, and in that event, a further appropriation will be needed to pay counsel for managing the case at Washington City.

LUNATIC ASYLUM.

The last legislature made some provision for the erection of a Lunatic Asylum. To make the location, three commissioners were appointed, who selected Fulton, in Callaway county, as the place entitled to the asylum, under the provisions of the law. It was intended to appropriate that portion of the surplus revenue allotted to this State to the erection of the asylum, but the law providing for its reception by the State, was never signed by the Lieutenant Governor, and was, therefore, very properly decided by the Treasury Department to be no law. In consequence we were not permitted to draw the surplus revenue, and not receiving this fund, and having no other, the commissioners made the location, but no progress with the buildings for the asylum. This subject will call for action. An asylum ought long since to have been erected in this State, and should not be further delayed.

[Appropriations are recommended to repair, and refurnish the Governor's house; and an increase of salary is also recommended; in pursuance of an act of the last Legislature, a sword has been prepared for Maj. Riley, who is now in California; the donation of the Sacramento cannon is acknowledged, and suggestions for their preservation made. A State Arsenal is recommended; expenses incurred in raising troops, for the late war are recommended to be paid; the repeal of the law providing for the election of public printer is recommended, and the printing to be let out to the lowest bidder.]

BANK DEBT.

The State is indebted to the Bank, and the Bank demanded payment before the adjournment of the last legislature, but too late in the session to render it advisable to recommend any action upon the subject. This case forms an exception to the assertion made in a preceding article, that our State generally makes timely arrangements to meet the demands against her; and whether it is proper even now to comply with that demand or not is a matter left for your consideration. The State has made the Bank and mainly owns it, and appoints nearly all the directors. Whether,

then, the Bank shall dictate to the State, or the State to the Bank, is deemed a very proper matter for your consideration, and one for your decision.

In the wisdom, prudence and patriotism of the Bank, if we judge the future by the past, but little confidence can be reposed. This remark is made mainly in allusion to the mother Bank, most of the branches having been better and more profitably managed, and some of them with an eye more certainly directed to the interest of the State.

On a previous occasion the Bank claimed the payment of a similar debt, but one larger in amount—bearing six per cent per annum interest. An act was passed authorizing the Governor to borrow \$253,000, in part to be applied in the discharge of the debt. Bonds were issued under this act, and made payable in ten years, but redeemable in five, and were endorsed by the Bank; and in a time of profound peace, were sold under that endorsement, bearing the exorbitant rate of ten per cent. per annum interest. The proceeds as far as required, were applied to the payment of the debt due the Bank. Thus the State paid off a debt to her own Bank—about the equivalent of paying a debt to herself—bearing six per cent. interest, by contracting another with citizens of other States, bearing ten per cent. interest, and this at the urgent demand of the Bank. On the part of the mother Bank it is believed that an average of six per cent.—the rate of interest paid by the State—even on her capital, has never yet been realized. It was then not wise, prudent or patriotic, to call upon the State to pay the debt bearing six per cent. interest, when the only mode of doing it was to contract another of equal amount bearing ten per cent.—The Bank gained nothing by the operation, and the State lost four per cent. upon the whole debt. The seminary and saline funds have told even a more distressing tale as to the manner in which the Bank has managed them; and the scanty returns made to the University and the common schools in the shape of dividends upon these funds have deprived many children of the education to which they were entitled. But the Bank may have doubted the solvency of the State, and if so, very naturally felt an interest in reclaiming her debt before the Treasury became bankrupt. Her conduct in connexion with the effort to pay off the above bonds, at the end of five years, when they became redeemable, by refusing to indorse for the State—another important part of the history of this matter—would seem to strengthen the above idea.

The refusal of the Banks to indorse occurred in this way. An act was passed the 27th of March 1845 authorizing an issue of bonds to bear an interest not to exceed eight per cent. per annum, to be exchanged for the above ten per cent. bonds or to be sold to raise funds to redeem them. During the progress of the war, and while the money market was not in a good condition, and when the government of the United States was beginning to borrow largely to defray the expenses of her armies, the Executive prevailed on the holders of nearly all the ten per cent. bonds redeemable in the year 1846, to exchange them for eight per cent. bonds, thus saving an annual interest of two per cent.; but they agreed to exchange only on condition that the Bank would indorse the eight per cent. bonds just as she had indorsed the ten per cents five years before. In pursuance of this arrangement, application was made to the Bank to indorse, but the Bank, instead of endorsing at their first meeting—and not hesitating an instant to do what she had done before, and to relieve herself and the State from liability for two per cent. on that large amount of money, over 250,000 dollars—took time to examine, consult, deliberate, and finally refuse to indorse for the State. Thus ended the negotiation—the State being disgraced by the refusal of her own Banks to indorse her bonds—and under that refusal compelled still to pay ten per cent. upon the debt of more than \$250,000, instead of only eight per cent.

PENITENTIARY.

It became my duty four years ago to vote to a bill appropriating 35,000 dollars for improvements about the penitentiary.—This bill was probably passed in consequence of representations from the lessees that they were compelled to have more cells and more room. Soon after the veto of this bill, the inspectors of the penitentiary gave the lessees a contract for building a block of cells. That block has now been in the course of construction nearly four years, but notwithstanding representations of its great and urgent necessity for immediate use, the building still remains incomplete. This excites a strong presumption that the building was more necessary to pay up the rent accruing to the State than to confine the convicts. Nearly six years of the present lease have expired and if it was found safe and convenient to keep the old cells in use that long, and to defer the completion of the new cells up to this time it is not unfair to conclude that with a little care and some repairs, the convicts might have been kept safely in the old cells during the remainder of the present lease. This would have saved the State some twenty thousand dollars to have been used in paying her debts. Besides this, if it had been known in the next letting of the penitentiary, that contracts for work were to be given to the lessees to pay the rent, this fact would have tended greatly to increase the bids, and would have added another sum to the State revenue to be used in paying debts. As the block of cells is

now nearly complete, it is probable that another appropriation will be asked of the present legislature for some other work about the penitentiary. It is well for every legislature to be cautious of public contractors, especially where the partnership is composed of men of different political parties, as is generally the case, not only in this State, but in every State in the Union, and especially in contracts for the United States. This Union of men of different politics is usually for the purpose of uniting the different parties in the legislature in applications from the partnership concerns for alterations, improvements or additions to their contracts, and it is generally the strongest, most efficient and successful of all combinations for log-rolling purposes, and often produces results striking legislatures themselves with perfect astonishment. Such men, without being the representatives of any part of the people, in fact being nothing short of public swindlers, enter the halls of legislation, and offer members their support of favorite measures provided the members will advocate their applications for changes, alterations, improvements, or more pay in their own contracts. Members are drilled privately, the whigs by the whig contractor, and the democrats by the democratic contractor—members of both parties are united in favor of the measure, and this often gives it the appearance, to such as have not the time to investigate the matter, of being just and right, when the application is decidedly wrong. No body can doubt now the correctness of the veto of the penitentiary bill, yet that was passed by a large majority of the legislature. It is clear to every one that the main object on the part of the lessees, was to prepare the way to pay the \$50,000 of rent which they had agreed to pay the State and get pay for whatever further improvements the change proposed might require to be made. A legislature should act upon such measures with great caution. All their information comes from men deeply interested in a pecuniary point of view. And individual members should be cautious how they pledge or commit themselves, or barter their votes in such cases. In opposing such concerns, it is not unusual for a man to bring upon his head their opposition and even violent abuse. For vetoing the penitentiary bill the executive was even charged with "bribery and corruption," and an honorable member of the Legislature,—William Carson of Marion—was called upon to prove this charge. He was chairman of the Penitentiary committee and knew all about the matter. In reply to an interrogatory in the case, he says in a letter, dated Dec. 26, 1845, "that the idea of bribery and corruption on the part of the Governor, was not spoken or thought of as far as he knew until after the veto of the penitentiary bill." "The first notice I saw of it was in the 'Visitor' published at Warsaw, either editorially or by a correspondent. I did not impugn the motives of the Governor nor of any of the parties concerned."

Then the witness called upon to prove the charge, says he never heard of it till "after the veto of the penitentiary bill," and that "the first notice he saw of it was in the 'Visitor' published at Warsaw, either editorially or by a correspondent," and this notice, which the witness first saw, was the false charge itself—published by those making it. To say the least of it, this was a poor recompense for throwing one's self between the Treasury and the public swindler, and thus saving the taxes wrung from the hard earnings of the people; but a public officer, in our times, is more apt to be rewarded for a violation of duty, than to be excused for a faithful discharge of it.

SYSTEM OF LEASING.

The present system of leasing the penitentiary ought to be changed or abandoned. The interests of the State and the reformation of the convicts both require an alteration. To save the executive in the pardoning power,—one of his most important and delicate duties—a power not unlike that exercised by our creator towards ourselves—even the worst of us—a change would be made. This change is due to the lessees. The present system of leasing gives the lessees the right to all the labor of the convicts. This interests them naturally in keeping the best men and most valuable hands, and in aiding the liberation of the worst and least valuable. Every exercise of the pardoning power deprives them of the labor of some hands, and usually the best ones go first. This brings the executive and the lessees in collision, and every effort is made to embarrass him in the discharge of this important duty. The language is not the most elegant, yet it is hardly a figure of speech and to say, that the present system of leasing may have the tendency, at every instance of an exercise of the pardoning power, to force the executive under the direct fire of a floating battery of falsehoods. The merits of the case afford him no relief from such attacks. In justice to the lessees and the executive, and to prevent this collision between cupidity and mercy, if the leasing system is not abandoned, it should be so changed as to make the lessees pay only for the time that the convicts may actually labor in their employ. This system has been adopted in some states and has been found to operate better than ours. This change should be made before the next letting of the penitentiary and so as to take effect then. The Legislature or the Inspectors ought to appoint the physician to the penitentiary. One or more officers should be appointed to examine the convicts, and to aid them, where they are probably innocent, in get-

ting the facts of their cases for the use of the executive. At present they are denied all facilities of this character; and yet there is no doubt in the minds of some who have the means of forming opinions, that men are now confined in the penitentiary for offences which they never committed.

INTERNAL IMPROVEMENTS.

As the State has now commenced paying off her debts, and as the people were never in a more flourishing condition, by pursuing this policy steadily and judiciously, we may soon discharge all our obligations. In the meantime, the condition of our finances, the increasing wealth, population, agricultural products and manufactures of the country, will justify a preparation for the prosecution of a system of internal improvements.

Before any works are commenced, however, we should collect plans, prepare estimates and ascertain the relative value and cost of works of different characters; for example the plain roads, plank roads, macadamized roads, rail roads, canals, locks and dams or slack water and deepening shoals. These plans should be taken from works already constructed, and the estimates should be made from the actual cost of works already completed, and in every case the estimate should be accompanied by the price of labor and provisions at the time the work was constructed, the cost of material and character of the natural base or foundation on which the work was erected. Estimates made by men seeking employment are seldom fair tests of the actual cost of an improvement and should be taken by a legislature with much caution. They have been found, generally, to be too low, and States acting upon them have been involved and greatly injured. We have many objects of internal improvement about which we should be collecting information.

We have several rivers that must become subjects of improvement as the population of the country and means at command increase. The St. Francis, with improvement, may become a good stream for the section of country through which it flows. As much of it runs through a flat country, its waters are of course discharged slowly, and where this is the case, a much smaller volume of water makes a stream navigable. Black river is a stream of which but little has ever been said in the legislature, yet it well deserves attention among these enumerated as objects of improvement. In its character, it is more like the St. Francis than other rivers of the south, and all such rivers are more easily rendered navigable than those having a greater amount of fall. Current river in the south is a bold stream and affords a large amount of water, and with locks and dams may be made navigable for steam boats high up in the State. This river would furnish a large amount of water power for manufacturing purposes. North Grand river, although probably discharging a less amount of water, has yet the appearance of being larger than Current river. This stream might also be made navigable with locks and dams, and flowing through a country rich in soil and population, the water power would be of immense value for manufacturing purposes.

The Osage is a stream of still larger size and waters a greater extent of country, and, passing through a fertile region, embraces in its interest a much larger population. As to the proper plan of improving this river there are various opinions; so many and so different that a mere guess as to the best plan would be useless. Before any large amount of money is expended on it proper tests should be made as to the feasibility and usefulness and cost of different plans. A very large, industrious and wealthy population is now interested in the improvement of that river, and the subject merits serious attention; but no hasty and badly prepared plan should be adopted. An unsuccessful plan would injure the river and the reputation of the country. The work should be entered upon with great care and caution.

Of the improvement of the Missouri enough was said in my message to the legislature, and what was then said, after two years more of reflection and observation, it is still believed, deserves your attention and action. The most important results are often produced by the proper and timely application of means apparently weak and inefficient, and too cheap and simple to effect their object. But practical and experienced river men have approved of the plan suggested for the improvement of the Missouri. No permanent work, except the removal of snags and preventing others from falling into the channel can be made on this river. The shoals themselves are temporary and the improvements on them must be equally so. But they are easily improved. A good dredge might be of great use in deepening the shoals. This operation on the Missouri would be unlike a similar one on almost any other stream. The shoals are wide and deepening a channel of fifty or sixty feet would hardly effect the pools above. In fact the Missouri may be said to have no pools. The water falls every where and forms a swift current.

White river is represented as a valuable stream. In its character it resembles Current river, but furnishes a larger amount of water, and in its unimproved state can be navigated at times.—The improvement of this river will be an object of great interest to a portion of the people of the southwest. South Grand River or Newho lies beyond the State—a beautiful stream, flowing but a little west of our western boundary, and collecting in its course nearly or quite all the waters of the south west corner of the State. The improvement of this river is a subject of deep interest to some of our south western counties.—But this is a work for the General Government, the river lying beyond our jurisdiction, if the survey of our western boundary be correct. This improvement of this river should be presented to the attention of Congress by a memorial from the legislature. The time must come when the improvement will be made, and there is no danger of putting off that time by presenting the subject at an early day.

But of all the improvements enumerated one claims more urgently your attention and immediate action than the drainage of the southern swamps. This subject is not unimportant to the United States, it is important to the State, and of the deepest importance to that particular region. The health of the country, its wealth and prosperity, the increase of population, the travel both by water and land depend upon it. The plan of asking Congress for alternate sections of the land to defray the expenses of reclaiming it, is probably the best which has been proposed. It is healthy and the character of the lands to be