EASTON GAZETTE.

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RELIGION purifies the Heart and teaches us our Duty—Morality refines the Manners—Agriculture makes us Rich, and Politics provides for the enjoyment of all."

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MESSAGE OF GOV. THOMAS.

The Annual Message of the Executive to the General Assembly of Maryland was communicated to the two Houses on Wednesday, January 1st. We subjoin those portions which relate to the more important concerns of the State. And first and chief of these are the facts and statements with regard to our public indebtedness.—After a brief introduction Gov. Thomas enters at once upon this subject:

In former Messages of the Executive, the extent of our financial embarrassments was disclosed, and the total insufficiency of our revenue laws demonstrated. In my last Message it became my duty to announce to the Legislature the signal failure of all the financial measures adopted by their predecessors, to accomplish the purposes for which they were devised. The Legislature with a patriotic determination to arrest the downward tendency of the public credit, enacted various laws at the last session supposed at the time to be adequate to the object of their enactment. It is my unpleasant duty to inform you that the measures referred to are wholly insufficient for the intended purpose. The whole revenue system of the State, designed to provide for the payment of the interest on the public bond debt, so far from realizing the expectations of its authors, serves but little other purpose than to disappoint and tantalize, both the tax-payer and the creditor.

The interest in arrear on the 1st December, 1842, was $859,656; on the 1st of December, 1843, it was $1,171,872,97, and on the 1st of Dec. 1844, it amounted to $1,450,961 51. This progressive increase of charges against the Treasury ought surely to be arrested. To do this effectually, the errors of past legislation must be studiously avoided. Those who are charged with the duty of providing ways and means to replenish an exhausted Treasury, must come from the ideal into the real world. Their measures, instead of being founded on sanguine expectations and fanciful estimates, must be based on well ascertained facts. To make this very clear, we need only to pass, respectively, in review some of the measures to which I have adverted, and note the results.

After the passage of the tax law of March session, 1841, and when the assessed value of the property of the State subject to its provisions had been ascertained the Treasurer of the State with a prudent foresight and manly frankness that did him honor, informed the Legislature that a large increase of the rate of the direct tax was indispensable. The Legislature, not acting in conformity with that suggestion, entered into the field of speculation and uncertainty. It was assumed that the act of March session, 1841, and its supplement at December session following, imposing a tax for the first year of twenty, & for the three next years twenty five cents in the hundred dollars on the assessed value of the real and personal property of the State, would bring into the Treasury, for the four years ending on the first December last, $1,818,256,57 while it appears that the whole amount received from that source within that period is but $985,155 17.

In aid of these estimated incomes, other laws were enacted expected to bring into the Treasury in the course of each fiscal year $200,000. These laws have been in force during three fiscal years, and, instead of realising the expectations of their authors by contributing to the demands upon the Treasury, the sum of $600,000, have added only $15,297 95 to the income of the State.

At December session, 1843, the highly qualified officer then having charge of the Treasury, in the spirit of fidelity and frankness manifested by his predecessor, declared to the Legislature that an increase of the rate of taxation then existing was absolutely necessary for the redemption of the faith of the State, and the restoration of public credit. These prudent admonitions were again disregarded. The most fallacious calculations and estimates as to the probable receipts of the Treasury for the year just closed, were relied upon. To guard against further errors of that character, and to demonstrate the necessity that exists for decisive, energetic measures, it may not be out of place to present some few ascertained facts, illustrative of the errors of these last legislative calculations.

Notwithstanding the experience of the past, the Committee of Ways and Means, the proper organ of the House of Delegates on the subject, at the last session, estimated the probable receipts under existing revenue laws, for the year 1844, exclusive of the direct taxes due for 1841 and '42, at $490,000. The entire amount actually paid in was $272,145,20.

The several revenue laws passed at December session, 1841, imposing taxes on incomes, on brokers, silver plate, watches and ground rents, added to the interest expected from the Baltimore and Susquehanna Rail Road, and the Susquehanna and Tide Water Canal Companies, would, it was confidently said, add to the resources of the past year $145,000. From these sources the whole income received is but $32,732 95.

These defalcations in the revenue are to be imputed in a great degree to the palpable insufficiency of the whole taxes levied even if punctually paid. As long as our tax laws have this obvious aspect, we may expect a large portion of the public dues will be withheld, in the belief that the attempt to pay the public debt will at no distant day be abandoned.

When the direct tax was levied, the property of the State was estimated at three hundred millions of dollars. If this estimate had been correct, the rate of tax then imposed would have been sufficient. When the actual value of the property was ascertained to be less than two hundred millions, there was no alternative for those who intended to pay the interest on the public debt by taxation, but to increase the rate of the levy from twenty to thirty cents on the hundred dollars thus to secure an income from the ascertained value of the property of the State, equal to that intended to be collected upon its estimated value. Instead of so doing, the Legislature undertook to rely upon other sources of revenue, that should at all times be regarded only as the means to supply those deficiencies in the regular annual income from the direct tax, necessarily arising from delays of payments, insolvencies and other causes unforeseen and inevitable.

Another fatal error was committed in failing to enforce the laws against the first delinquents. Forbearance and indulgence towards these, engendered in the public mind a doubt as to the existence of a fixed and steady purpose to maintain inviolate the public faith. In this state of things others were encouraged to follow the example of the delinquents; and now instead of three we have seven counties within whose boundaries the tax laws are not all enforced.

Repeated refusals of the Legislature to authorise an exchange of the Banks stocks of the State, for evidences of interest in arrear, have had a deleterious influence. The stocks can, it is confidently believed, be exchanged readily for an amount of coupons and certificates of interest, largely beyond their value in money. When so favorable an opportunity is presented to realize for a portion of the public property more than its value, without an apparent effort to profit by it, it would be strange if very many persons did not entertain doubts, and misgivings, as to the intention of the State to redeem the faith which she had pledged for the ultimate discharge of the public debt. Communities, like individuals, may by imprudence, or erroneous calculations become involved in pecuniary embarrassments, without necessarily incurring dishonor; but it is not readily perceived how either the one, or the other, having no intention to defraud, can withhold property from suffering creditors, willing to take it in liquidation of their just claims, at a higher price than it will command in market.

The laws of last session empowering the Governor, in certain contingences, to commission officers for the enforcement of the tax laws, have been found altogether incapable of correcting the evil they were intended to remedy. No one in the defaulting counties, it appears, is willing to encounter the odium of becoming the collector of the tax levied to pay the interest on our internal improvement debt. These laws, themselves, contain provisions calculated to frustrate the principal design of their enactment. In the power conferred upon the Treasurer to appoint agents with authority to receive voluntary payment of taxes, there is an inducement to every citizen of the delinquent counties, to decline the acceptance of a commission constituting him a collector. The Collector when qualified as such would be subject to a law requiring him, under certain penalties, to enforce the payment of the public dues; while the agent of the Treasurer is only to accept such contributions to the Treasury as are voluntarily tendered.

It will readily be perceived, therefore, that it would be difficult to find one willing or desirous, to undertake the execution of obnoxious laws, when the Legislature itself seemed to anticipate a refusal to do so and had actually provided an alternative, which appeared to be applicable to such a contingency. These antagonist provisions being embodied in the same law, have, it is believed contributed to the results just adverted to. No one can be prevailed upon to except a commission as collector in the defaulting counties, and the Treasurer has appointed agents in those counties under the authority of the law. From that officer the Senate and House will be informed of the amount received from his agents.—When that information is communicated, an opportunity will be afforded (two modes of collection having been tested,) to select that which is most easy of execution, and best calculatedt o consummate the purposes of the revenue laws. Whatever may be the decision of the Legislature on this point the same mode of collection should undoubtedly be adopted throughout the State. It is not just to have compulsory and summary collections in some counties, and voluntary, or procrastinated payments in others.

By the eighth section of Chapter 269, of an act passed at December session, 1842, the Governor was directed, if in his judgement the interest of the State required it, to order suit to be instituted on the bond of every collector who failed to pay into the Treasury, the amount of taxes collected by him, on the day appointed for that purpose. In the execution of this duty, the bonds of collectors who had failed to pay the instalment due to the Treasury on the 1st of June, 1843, were put in suit and in my annual message at the last session, the Senate and House were respectfully informed, that suits would be instituted for the recovery of the instalments due on the 1st of September of the same year, unless otherwise directed by the Legislature. The subject was taken into consideration, and by resoulution No. 4, of that session, it was declared to be the sense of the General Assembly, that suits ought not to be instituted, as proposed, before the 1st of June last. Before the close of the same session, a law was passed which is considered as superseding the discretionary authority which had been vested in the Governor.

By a provision in the eighth section of an act passed at December session 1843, chap. 208, it is made the duty of the proper officers, in those counties, Howard District or the city of Baltimore where there may be no collector, to place annually in the hands of the Deputy of the Attorney General for such county district or city, a list of all persons who may be in arrear for taxes more than one year, and the amount due from each; whereupon the Deputy of the Attorney General, is instructed to obtain, by summary process before the county court, judgment against all persons thus in arrear, upon which execution is to issue to the sheriff whose duty it is, without delay, to pay over the money collected upon such execution to the Treasurer, and on failure to do so, his bond shall be put in suit.

Regarding this as an act dispensing with the requirement upon the Governor to institute suits as before mentioned, and seeing that it is applicable to all the counties in the State, I have not thought it advisable to exercise the discretion conferred on me by the law and resolution above referred to. It may, however, be as well for you to inquire, to what extent this act can be conveniently executed. It proposes to put under execution at one and the same time, so large an amount of property as to make it doubtful whether purchasers could be obtained for it on terms not absolutely ruinous to the interests of those unfortunately indebted. In the present state of popular feeling, when a spirit of insubordination to the tax laws is openly manifested in more than one third of the counties, we may well question the propriety of any measure which might furnish to the disaffected even plausible excuse for futher combinations to resist or evade their faithful execution.

The opinion is expressed that one of the most predominant causes operating to suspend the efficient action of the Revenue system of the State, is to be found in the fallacious expectations which have been entertained of deriving aid from the General Government. Upon this point the Message dwells at some length.

The law of December session, 1842, for the sale of the State's interest in the several internal improvement companies remains a dead letter on the statute book. The Message intimates that this law was enacted in contravention to a previous engagement, by which the State had bound herself. It appears that a law was passed in 1841, March Session, chap. 23, providing that the stock of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company should be distributed among the counties of the State, the city of Baltimore and Howard District, according to the amount of revenue paid by them respectively such distribution to be made *whenever the company is prepared to declare a dividend of six per cent to its stockholders.*

The Message refers to the several works of internal improvement in the State. The Baltimore and Susquehanna Rail Road Company has paid $20,000 into the Treasury within the year. The trade on that road has greatly increased. From a transportation of some 4000 tons in 1839 its business has increased to about eighteen thousand six hundred tons.

The Tide Water Canal Company has paid within the year $10,000 into the State Treasury and stands indebted for arrears of interest on the State's loan $202,000. For these arrears, we believe, the State holds the Company's bonds.

The receipts into the Treasury from the Baltimore and Ohio Rail Road exceed, by a small amount, the interest on the State's investment in that work. The capitation tax on the Washington Branch for the year ending Dec. 1, 1844, amounts to $41, 040 29. For the three preceeding years it averaged $40,157,16. The increase is not believed to be so great as ought to have been anticipated, and the cause is ascribed to the inability of the Company to lower their rates of fair without authority from the Legislature, which at the last session was refused.

In allusion to the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal the Messsage says:

Since June last no report has been received from the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Company, furnishing information as to its present condition or future prospects. It is believed, however, that within that period no such material change has taken place in its affairs, as if communicated, would assist the Legislature in deciding finally—and it is most earnestly, but respectfully, urged upon the Senate & House to do so—what disposition shall be made of the very large interest of the State in that corporation. Further postponement and delay on this subject cannot possibly be productive of good to any of the interests to be affected.

For more than sixteen years the State has been concerned, with other parties, in the undertaking to make a Canal from tide water on the Potomac, to the coal fields and iron ore banks of Allegany.—For five years past the work has made very little progress. During this last period the interest due to the State, and of which it has received no part, amounts in the aggregate to more than two millions of dollars The corporation stands honestly indebted to the amount of more than one million of dollars to individuals, many of whom are in a state of extreme want and privation, caused by the unjust withholding of their hard earned wages. I submit whether considerations of public justice and private morality do not require at the hands of the representatives of the people, an early and just disposition of these claims.

If it shall appear that neither the credit of the State, nor of the corporation, can be made available, so as to progress at once to the completion of the Canal, without ruinous sacrifices to the creditors of the company, would it not be advisable, now, to adopt decided measures to determine clearly the vested interests of Maryland in that company? When that has been done, by a foreclosure of the State's mortgages, the facilities for pledging our interest in the corporation, will be so far increased as probably to diminish to a great extent, if not entirely to supercede the pecuniary sacrifices, which have been heretofore considered necessary to insure the completion of the Canal to Cumberland.

The Message refers briefly to the condition of the Penitentiary of which our readers were fully informed some days ago.

The Legislature is notified that certain standards of weights and measures, directed by act of Congress to be prepared and distributed among the States, have been received by John H. Alexander, Esq. the agent appointed for Maryland. The measure of length is not yet completed.—The standard balance will probably be received in the course of the present month.

The concluding portion of the Message is devoted to the subject of Texas and annexation and upon this topic Gov. Thomas expatiates at considerable length. He argues in favor of annexation.

FLOGGING AN EDITOR.

Some years ago, a populous town, located in the interior of Mississippi, was infested by a gang of blacklegs, who amused themselves at times, when they could find nobody else to pluck, by preying upon each other. A new importation of these sporting gentry excited some alarm among the inhabitants, lest they should be completely overrun—they determined therefore, on their expulsion. A poor wretch of a country editor, who was expected, by virtue of his vocation, to take upon himself all the responsibilities from which others might choose to shrink, was peremptorily called upon by his "patrons"—that is, those who paid him two dollars a year for his paper, and therefore presumed they owned him soul and body—to make an effort towards the extermination of the enemy. The unfortunate editor, like most editors, being gifted with just about as much brains as money—skull & purse both empty—said at once that he would indite a "flasher," one that would undoubtedly drive the obnoxious vermin into some more hospitable region. And when his paper appeared it was a "flasher" sure enough. In the course of his observations, he gave the initials of several of the fraternity, whom he desired to leave town as speedily as possible, if they had the slightest desire to save their bacon.

The next morning, while the poor scribe was comfortably seated in his office, listlessly fumbling over a meagre parcel of exchanges, he heard footseps on the stairs, and presently an individual having accomplished the assent, made his appearance. His first salutation was slightly abrupt.

'Where is the editor of this dirty, lying paper?'

Now, aside from the rudeness of this opening interrogatory, there were other considerations that induced the editor to believe there was trouble on foot. The personage who addressed him bore a cowhide in his hand, and moreover, seemed to be exceedingly enraged. This was not all—he recognized in him a distinguished leader of the sporting fraternity with whose cognomen he had taken very irreverent liberties. It was without the slightest hesitation, therefore, that he replied to the introductory query.

'I don't know."

'Do you belong to the concern?'

'No, indeed, but I presume the editor will soon be in.'

'Well,' said the visiter, 'I will wait for him,' and suiting the action to the word, he composedly took a chair, picked up a paper and commenced reading.

'If I meet him,' said the frightened night of the scissors and quill, 'I will tell him there is a gentleman here wishes to see him.'

As he reached the foot of the stairs, in his hasty retreat, he was accosted by another person, who thus made himself known:—

'Can you tell me where I can find the sneaking rascal who has charge of this villainous sheet?' producing the last number of 'Freedom's Echo and the Battle Axe of Liberty?'

'Yes,' replied the editor, 'he is up there in the office now, reading, with his back to the door.'

'Thank you,' exclaimed the stranger; as he bounced up stairs.

'I've got you, have I,' ejaculated he as he made a grasp at his brother in iniquity, and they came crashing to the floor together.

As the combatants, notwithstanding the similarity of their vocation, happened to be unacquainted with each other, a very pretty quarrel, ensued. First one was at the top, then the other—blow followed blow, kick followed kick, and oath followed oath, until bruised, exhausted and bloody, with faces and features resembling Deaf Burke after a two hours pugilistic encounter, there was by mutual consent a cessation of hostilities. As the warriors sat on the floor contemplating each other, the first comer found breath enough to ask,

'Who are you, what did you attack me for?'

'You abused me in your paper, you scoundrel.'

'Me! I'm not the Editor, I came here to flog him myself!'

Mutual explanations and apologies ensued, and the two mistaken gentlemen retired to 'bind up their wounds.' As the story comes to us, the distinguished individual whose vocation it was to enlighten the world by the aid of that great engine, the public press, escaped Scot-free.—Crescent City.

A YANKEE IN IRELAND.—The following story was told us by a friend who vouches for the truth of the statement.—During the last summer a gentleman who is a cotton planter in the State of Georgia, and somewhat of an eccentric genius, being fascinated with the discription of Galway, as given by the facetious Charles O'Malley, determined to inspect personally the bread of the Milky Fees and Baby Blakes on their native hills. Having shipped his sea island for Liverpool, he jogged along to New York, and took passage in one of the packets. After making the necessary arrangements with his factors, he started for the Emerald Isle. Our peculiar nationalities soon made him known, and he became quite a lion; sure enough he found a perfect counterpart of Miss Baby, and fun he had to his heart's content; his letter of credit in the neighboring bank, together with his high finished education, established him in the heart of the family, which excited the irascibility of some of the cousins who held Americans at no enviable discount. They tried in every way to provoke or (to use the Irish term 'coax' a fight out of him; but he showed no inclination to quarrel with any body. A story was then circulated that he was a knight of the white feather and they in their turn, (Miss Baby included) were determined to give cowardly Yankee an insight into the manners and customs of the Natives. So immediately after breakfast the *soi-disant* Miss Baby, coaxed, cajoled & provoked our hero into a demand for a kiss. He insisted—she tormented; & just at this moment in stepped a gent of the guards the cousin; nothing would do short of a fight. The fair one laughed the Yankee rubbed hands and grinned, the soldier looked broad-swords and grape shot.

The two gentlemen stepped into an adjoining room where they found quite a little party of gentlemen from the neighborhood looking as innocent as babes. 'Well,' said the Georgian as soon as the door was closed, 'I don't know much about fighting but I reckon I want one of you gentlemen to act as my friend in a bit of a fight that's going to come off between me and this gentlemen here, pointing to the Guardsmen.

A dozen offered their services saying, it would afford them quite a pleasure.'—Selecting the one who stood nearest, the preliminaries were soon arranged. Pistols were selected, when our friend, the Georgian, remarked that he 'would like to shoot it off just to see how it would go.' The apparent innocence with which the request was made raised a laugh at the greenness of our hero, and his wishes were complied with. The parties had by this time arrived near the ground that was selected for the duel. The whole troop of friends had accompanied the belligerants. A pistol being loaded was put in the hand of our countryman who held it in a most awkward manner, and bracing himself firmly he levelled it at a tree near by, and shutting both eyes gave the trigger a desperate pull—the tree was not hit.

A titter passed through the whole company; they thought that they had sport enough on hand for one day; but they forgot the notoriety of Yankee cunning. He had by this scheme got the hang of the pistol, and ascertained the charge and force of the powder. All being now ready the word was given. Five paces, wheel and fire.—Nothing seemed to disturb the matter-o'-fact manner of the Georgian; he took his paces, taking care to step short steps; he wheeled like a flash of lightning and fired at the instant. The guardsman fell wounded in the groin. This drew all eyes for an instant from the Yankee, but when the bystanders looked again, he was still standing in the position, grasping his pistol in apparent convulsions and both eyes shut fast. In a minute he opened his eyes and seemed to notice for the first time, that his adversary was down; and he exclaimed, 'What! is he killed?' and throwing down his pistol, began feeling of, and examining himself, to learn if he could not find a wound upon himself—seeming the whole time perfectly innocent and unsophisticated.

The guardsman being wounded excited the ire of his companions, and one of them demanded the right of a shot at the Yankee which proposition our countryman did not seem to disrelish, but thinking he should have to fight the whole crowd one at a time, he broke out in the following few words:

'Look here now, I reckon that you are determined that I shall fight the whole of you one at a time, which I dont like pretty well; but Ill tell you what I will do, there are just sixteen of us; you shall get me a gun—about a four pounder, or smaller.—I and my friend shall take this side of the field, seven of you shall take pistols and stand along in a row, & the other seven shall be their friends. I will load my gun with seven grape shot, & you shall have each one ball in your pistol this will make it just shot for shot, and we will fire at the word at fifteen paces.' The cool business-like calculation was rather too much for the suns of Green Ireland; they declared our hero to be a 'broth of a boy,' and insisted upon his accepting of a sumptuous dinner and offered invitations extending over several months which he declined, saying 'that the next day he must start for Liverpool to see how his cotton was selling.'—A kiss was voluntarily tendered the next morning by the fair one, which the Georgian on his part ungallantly declined, and he took his departure much against the inclination of all present who declared that 'those Yankee's were the quairest devils they ever saw.' The Georgian was Col. ——— of Steuben county.—*Boston Post.*

The Grave of Washington's Mother.—A correspondent of the New York Sun, writing from Fredericksburg, Virginia, says—"If I did not see Washington's tomb, I have seen his mother's. She lived and died here in Fredericksburg. The long white house in which she lived remains, and is inhabited by others, while a monument out in the fields, half finished covers her remains, and is a sad picture of something—completion and desolation. It is on the estate of Mr. Gordon, who has ostentatiously built a brick wall around some family graves near by as if their remembrance depended upon being linked with her's who has no need of epitaph or pointed stone." "The monument was designed and so far finished, by a New Yorker. He afterwards failed, having expended about $1[illegible],000 on it, and the monument stands unfinished!

The base is ten or twelve feet high, formed of several blocks of marble, each lessening in size and wrought in the Corinthian order; while the obelisk which is to crown it, a huge block of grey marble nearly fourteen feet in length, lies near by in the rough, well embedded in the sandy soil. Some wretches have made one side of the monument a shooting target, and have despoiled it in many ways. If I ever felt sorrow and indignation, it was while looking on a picture like this. The mother of Washington! with an unfinished monument—for shame Virginia! Where is thy chivalry, thy blush? But why do I chide—they are most to be pitied who can live & look on such a desecration. This is one of the oldest towns in Virginia has a little commerce on the Potomac, contains about 5000 inhabitants—but withall looks dilapidated & poor, like something once vigorous but now decayed."

The Pottsville Emporium of Saturday makes record of the following freak of the blind goddess fortune:—

"A poor but sober industrious shoemaker of the name of Hoover, residing at Port Carbon, and in this county, received information lately that a relative of his wife, who lately died in Germany, had bequeathed to her father, of the name of Shaffer, who formerly lived at Orwigsburg, and was also in indigent circumstances, money and property to the amount of one million and a half of dollars! Mr. Shaffer has been dead for some time, and Mrs. Hoover, his daughter, being the only child, Mr. Hoover thus falls heir to this immense fortune.—The necessary documents, establishing the validity of the will, &c. have been received and Christopher Loeser, Esq. has been chosen as attorney in the matter."

ANECDOTE OF DR. RUSH.—When he was a young man, he had been invited to dine in company with Robert Morris, Esq. a man celebrated for the part he took in the American revolution. It so happened that the company had waited some time for Mr. Morris, who on his appearance apologized for detaining them, by saying that he had been engaged in reading a sermon of a clergyman who had just gone to England to receive orders. "Well, Mr. Morris," said the doctor, "how did you like the sermon? I have heard it highly extolled."—"Why, Doctor," said he, "I did not like it all. Its too smooth and tame for me."—"Mr. Morris," replied the Doctor, "what sort of a sermon do you like?" "I like, sir," replied Mr. M., "that kind of preaching which drives a man into one corner of his pew, and makes him think the devil is after him.";

THE TIME FIXED AT LAST. In the "Midnight Cry" of Dec. 5th, we find a letter from Mr. Miller, which contains the following:

"I have fixed my mind upon another time, and here I mean to stand until God give me more light—and that, is *to-day*, TO-DAY, and TO-DAY, *until he comes.*"