

who in most cases are manifestly incompetent to protect themselves—I deemed it proper in conjunction with the Comptroller to advise the County Commissioners, who were to disburse this Bounty, to ignore as a general rule the powers of Attorney purporting to be executed by that class of volunteers, and to appoint in each county an Agent, who should personally visit and pay them the amount due, and who might bring back to their families such part of it as they chose to remit. Such Agents were I believe appointed in several of the counties, and they will properly have a claim upon the State for their expenses and reasonable compensation which I would commend to your attention; but a general State Agent who should have the supervision of all matters connected with these Bounties, is in my opinion an officer indispensably required. With the special duties thus required of him, others might be combined of a more general character and requiring a more permanent employment; the large arrearages due the State from Collectors and other public officers, and from year to year increasing, obviously demand the appointment of an Agent authorized and required to scrutinize the accounts of such officers as well as to enforce by legal process the collection of balances in their hands. I am aware that this is to some extent one of the duties of the Comptroller of the Treasury, but looking to the multitude of other matters engaging his attention, and the frequent changes that take place in that Department, it is practically impossible for him to exercise that personal supervision of the receivers of public money which a proper regard for the public interest demands. I feel assured that the judicious selection of an Agent, who should be required to visit every county, inspect the accounts and proceedings of all officers entrusted with the collection of public money, and institute suits for the balances in their hands would be productive of the most advantageous results.

In connection with the subject of the Soldiers' Bounties, I would call your attention to an appropriation of \$50,000 made by the last General Assembly for the relief of destitute families of such soldiers. This appropriation has never been used, not by any means because there were no wants of that character to be relieved, but because the sum appropriated was so inadequate for the purpose, that the Commissioners charged with its disbursement thought it useless to undertake to distribute it among the large number having equal claims to share it.

I would therefore submit to you the propriety of an increase of that appropriation, considering it more important and available as a means of providing for the suffering families