

Annual Message

Executive Department
December 28th 1847

Senators, and

Gentlemen of the House of Delegates

I can readily suppose that the annual communication of the Executive will be looked for by you at this time with more than ordinary interest.

It is well known that our State had for the past three years been engaged in the noble struggle to meet in good faith her pecuniary engagements. This effort was deemed hopeless by many of her most prominent citizens, who believed that the policy of accruing interest over the current receipts and consequent annual increase of indebtedness, had demonstrated her inability to overcome the pecuniary embarrassments which threatened to overwhelm her. At as late a period as the last session of the Legislature there were many of the best citizens of the State, and some of the most prominent of her Legislators, who believed that the time had not arrived when the State could with safety declare her solvency by fixing the day on which she would pay the interest on her public debt. Under such circumstances the public mind will be directed with peculiar interest to the fiscal developments of the past year; and you gentlemen, and your constituents, will hear with pride and satisfaction, that the bold, honest and patriotic course of your predecessors, in declaring that the State would on the first day of January 1848, resume the payment of her liabilities, has been fully justified by actual results.

By the fiscal operations of the two preceding years the arrears of interest had been reduced on the 1st of December 1846 to less than one million three hundred thousand dollars. Under the provisions of the resumption law of the last session no portion of the cash receipts of the treasury were intended to be applied to the payment of this interest, and great apprehensions were consequently felt lest the amount to be funded should be so large as to render the existing tax laws inadequate to meet with punctuality both the interest upon this debt, and upon the antecedent debt of the State.

In my last annual message, and in the report of the Committee of Ways and Means to the last Legislature, the arrears of interest to be funded were estimated at \$1,200,000, and even this estimate, intended to cover every probable contingency, was supposed to be much too small by those members of the last Legislature who opposed the resumption bill, which happily passed that body. I have now, gentlemen, the gratification to inform you that these