

In such case the State ought to take its chance in the work with any other lien creditor, or stockholder, and the only duty then resting upon the Commissioners of Public Works, is to use "the legal powers" which they possess, to secure the proper management of the work. These legal powers are the influences which the Commissioners may exercise in the direction of the companies concerned, through the directors whom they may appoint to represent the State therein.

The Commissioners appreciate so highly the important trusts confided to them, that they have no hesitation in saying to the Legislature that they are resolved to prevent, as far as possible, said appointments from bearing the impress of political nominations; they are clearly alive to the mischiefs which would result from throwing the public works of the State as prizes into the arena of politics.

They expect to deserve the confidence of the State by restraining this growing tendency of the times, in the department of public service which they control. They cannot too earnestly recommend to the Legislature that it should, as far as possible, relieve the public works of the State from all burdens or charges, which are not directly connected with the loans made to the companies of the credit of the State. These works make a far larger return to the State than the interest which they may pay upon its investment. They add to the wealth of the State, and thus increase the basis from which the taxes of the State are drawn. Indeed, we have no doubt, that these works have already, in this manner, paid twice over the debt which the State has contracted for them, and the adoption of a wise and liberal policy towards them, they will do more. Every fetter, every hindrance ought to be taken from them; within the limits of their separate powers, they ought to be left free to develop every resource that the energy of their creditors can discover.

With these general observations, the Commissioners close their report. The reports made by the Comptroller, and the various Internal Improvement Companies, are before your Honorable Body. The purposes of the Commissioners have been not to comment on these, but to indicate the line of policy to which these companies ought to conform, and to which the Commissioners desire that the Legislature should give them the opportunity of adhering.

All of which is respectfully submitted, by order of the board.

LEMUEL ROBERTS, *President.*

STATE HOUSE, Feb. 16, 1860.