The Innagural Address of President Roye The Prospects of Liberia. The following inaugural address of Hon.

Edward James Roye, lifth President of the Republic of Liberia, in West Africa, was delivered before the Legislature in joint convention at Monrovia, on the 3d of January, 1870. As it has never before been published in this country, it will be read with interest.

Mr. Roye, who is of pure African bloo was born at Newark, Ohio, February 3, 1815. He was educated at the Ohio University, at Athens, Ohio, and at Oberlin College, Ohio. He taught school in Chillicothe, Ohio, in 1836, engaged in business at Terre Haute, Ind., 1838-44, and removed to Liberia in 1845, where he has since resided. He is estimated to be worth more than two hundred thousand dollars. He has been Speaker of the House of Representatives, a member of the Senate, and also Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Liberia. He is a member of the Protestant Episcopal Church. With enlightened and patriotic views and purposes, he enters upon his administration asking "an earnest interest in the prayers" of the good and pious of his own country and of other lands.

Gentlemen of the Senate and House Representatives, Friends, and Fellow-Citizens:—Called by your suffrage to the responsible position of President of the Republic of Liberia, I have just taken the oath and obligation which the Constitution prescribes on

the induction of the Chief Magistrate. I have taken the oath with no mental reservation, fully determined to discharge all the duties it involves to the best of my feeble indement. The great constitution above all constitutions is God, from whom cometh every good and perfect gift: therefore before undertaking this important work, it is a privileged Christian duty to invoke the Divine guidance and blessing upon everything which we, as legislators and Executive, shall be required to do in behalf of Liberia and Africa. To this end we devoutly ask an earnest interest in the prayers not only of the good and pious of our own country, but also of those of other lands wheresoever Liberia and bleeding Africa may have sincere Christian friends.

The Providence of God indicates His will. He has assigned you seats in this honorable body; but those seats can be made truly honorable only by the faithful and efficient manner in which you discharge your duties to your constituents and to the nation generally. And permit me to add that you will prove true men only according as you acquit yourselves for the good of your race and country, and no further. And should you not prove true, it is my firm belief that God in some way will remove you to make room for others.

I believe that the object of our residence on this coast is to bear some humble part in bringing about the fulfilment of that cheering prophecy that Ethiopia shall stretch forth her hands unto God. Who among us will prove recreant to a trust of such magnitude. and involving such important consequences

Some of us would not consent to hold any office within the gift of the people, if the emolument and honors were the only inducement. Riches and honors heaped up for ourselves, in the midst of poor and ignominious masses around, whose wretched condition can be relieved by directing public affairs aright, are too insignificant to either of consideration or comparison in this

I am free to confess that if, under the guidance of Divine Providence, and with the cooperation of the Legislature and the people, I could effect no good, no improvement in the condition of Liberia, exerting benign influences upon the tribes by which we are surrounded, and ultimately upon Africa and maintaining good understanding with all nations fair and reciprocal comity-I would much prefer the retirement of private life. For the interest of Christian foreigners in God's cause of Africa's regeneration is so great, that they will vie with us in promoting it. But for this humble, yet pious confi-dence, I would not think of accepting an office of such grave responsibilities in their inevitable consequences and onerous duties to be performed, involving the unremitting exercise of the powers of the body and the mind. In the exercise of the latter, I may often err-since "it is human to err;" yet it shall not be an error of the heart, but of the head. Over errors arising from the head, if or when such should unfortunately occur, pray God to incline you to throw the veil of Christian charity.

Neither the time, nor the manner, nor the circumstance in which Ethiopia is to stretch forth her hands unto God, is declared. But I believe that Liberia is called to engage in the initiatory steps to bring about this glorious result.

In substance, I have asked, if you Liberians would not try, under God, to be the humble but efficient initiators of this great work for God and man. But a strong will, which is indispensable, must precede, and have and continue to exercise a moulding influence upon the character, beginning, progress, and completion of the great work sought as an end.

The manner in which agencies are to pro ceed is not indicated in the Bible. But it is fair to presume that the teeming millions of this peninsula are to be regenerated chiefly through indigenous agencies, yet those of an exotic kind are to have a share in furnishing, as it were, the key and mainspring thereof. Wherever God's will concerning Africa is known, in or out of it, and religiously felt to be a duty, there are men of general intelligence and means that will respond to the call. The wise and good of every nation invite us to redeem our race from the untold miseries of a protracted African night. They call us, on the one hand, boldly to undertake the work, and on the other we are urged to exertion by the old calumnies against the negro The low estimate at which the negro has been rated is, in my opinion, a strong motive power, the true incentive to propel us on the path of duty to serve the best interests of the people, the country, the day and generation in which our lot is cast. "God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth;" from which we must infer that if there be not one common destiny, the fault must be traced to dereliction or deficiency in the creature, as a free agent, and not to the Creator. The very unenviable notoriety given to the negro by those living upon the quitted fruits of his labor, who robbed him of mental culture, of right views of himself. in relation to his God and his fellow-men, ob scured his prospects as to all those things which they were interested in withholding from him.

It is our duty to prove that the mental and other disabilities under which the negro labors as a result of his servile antecedents are not inherent, as our adversaries would say, but

that they are solely the result of circumstances to be altogether removed when those circumstances are altered, or their influence

counteracted Do you need to be reminded that the removal of all those most odious and damaging epithets applied to us by our enemies naturally develves upon those who are the most injured by them? If we assiduously devote ourselves to this work of reconstructing the reputation of the race by successfully prosecuting the work before us in this land, it need not hereafter be told us, as if pointing out a new fact, that if we remain poor in a country rich by nature in the profusion of its productions, it must be a great dishonor.

It can never be sufficient for a few to be extraordinary exceptions to the race, for the acquisition of the arts and sciences, general intelligence, wealth, or any other distinction. But it should rather be an exception that a few should be found who had not se distinguished themselves.

This peninsula, as I have stated, is to be absolved from the disabilities of past ages mainly by those whom God has identified with it as its original inhabitants. For this cause, God, perhaps permitted the cruel slavery in foreign lands of our forefathers, that we might return as the missionaries of a Christian civilization.

We have been a poor people, from the combination of a number of causes operating against us, traceable to our inauspicious antecedents, which had been intensified by sordidly human agencies during the prolonged reign of unchecked wickedness in past times.

Still it becomes us to bear in mind that the masses of mankind make no allowance for the disabilities under which we have labored. and still do labor more or less, and which keep us back in a rich country. Nature, without the assistance of art, has made our country an acknowledged garden spot, which garden the exactions of the judgments of other nations demand that, if we be not inferior as a race, we shall improve to a paradise by labor, and by the application of the arts and sciences. We must find wherewithal to lay the foundation of an abiding negro republic whose perpetuity shall be guaranteed by the general education and intelligence of the people. For nations, like individuals, cannot succeed to any great distinction, unless industry, perseverance, and straightforwardness towards all with whom, without distinction, they shall chance to deal, be permanently established prerequisites and active prin-

We must adhere to the binding requirements of the Constitution; but such laws should be enacted from time to time in the progress of our development as shall encourage and invite foreign capitalists to make investments in the country.

PINANUES. A very important policy which it will be the earnest effort of the administration to carry out relates to the regulation of the finances. We must guard against a recurrence of an insufficiency of income to meet the expenses of the State, for where this is so frequent as to establish a large annual average against the republic, it is certain to lead to serious consequences. Our real danger lies not in the actual amount of debt, contracted as it has been thus far among our own people, but in the rate of increase. If there be no probability that the increase will cease, there can be no security against ultimate, perhaps early, bankruptcy. The customs duties, our chief source of revenue, are dependent for their augmentation upon an increase of the consuming power of the people. Advance in this branch of the revenue will depend upon the improvement of the people, native and Liberian, and upon those additional facilities for the interchange of commodities in the interior of which we shall

soon speak. We must have a sound par value currency. Import and export duties should be paid in the old currency and in gold and silver coin. The old currency should be taken out of the hands of the people, if they will consent to take "greenbacks" for it at a par exchange, upon the authority of a law which you may think proper to pass; the holders of the said currency making known the amounts they severally possess. The aggregate amount of it out is supposed to be between fifty and sixty thousand dollars. This proposition carried out will considerably relieve the depressed condition of our currency. I have no doubt that the sum required for the aforesaid redemption in "greenbacks" can be se-cu.ed upon a loan of six per cent., paying the interest in gold, and the principal in a given time to be settled by authority of an act of the Legislature. If we pray, nothing doubting, and exert ourselves, the money will come from somewhere. either in "greenbacks" or gold.

LABOR. Know ye, friends, that the source of all earthly riches is labor. When intelligently and constantly pursued, whether by farmers, mechanics, common laborers, doctors, lawvers, scientific men, or men of literary or mercantile pursuits, a proper industry will not fail to produce a good living, if not substantial fortunes,

The dignity of labor, then, is the means by which good faith in all our transactions can be most nobly sustained; and it cannot generally be national, unless it be common in the case of every man, woman, boy, and girl able to work. The ease and comfortable circumstances which will speedily accrue to these laborers in a country rich by nature like ours will soon drive all the drones out of the national beehive.

If we can more fully organize, not to say inaugurate, a system of labor, our general prosperity must and will be sure. We shall always have a par value currency. I have promised that the fifty or sixty thousand dollars of our old currency shall be, at least, on a par with American "greenbacks," and, further, it shall remain so. So soon as a little time shall have elapsed, this state of things can be brought into being.

As I have remarked, the work which is to be accomplished for the general prosperity of the country, the virtue of the people, and the honor of the race, is truly great and arduous, And notwithstanding on my part a naturally awakened diffidence is felt in the ability to secure the ultimate ends had in view, yet this diffidence is somewhat mitigated by the recollection of the trite saying, which I must repeat here, that "where there is a will there is a way." In the exercise of this will, I am sure you feel to join and participate; and thus united and untiring efforts will be put forth to give to our own countrymen and the world the fruits of a prosperous and happy home. I now come to consider another very important item in the policy of the administration upon which we are entering. The work which we propose may appear arduous. I believe it is; but it is my conviction that it is practicable;

and "where there is a will there is a way." RAILBOADS. In a country like ours, destitute of large navigable rivers, or canals penetrating the interior, where indigenous and spontaneous

HIS GRIMT HIRDS OR YOU

railroads must be at once evident. I believe that the erection of a railroad will have a wonderful influence in the civilization and elevation of the native tribes. The barriers of heathenism and superstition will disappear before the railroad and its concomitants, as frost, snow, and ice dissolve before a summer's sun. This is one of the most efficient means by which God's promise made cencern-

ing Africa is, in my opinion, to be fulfilled.

I do not deem it necessary to demonstrate to you the utility of railroads. We have numerous examples of their beneficial effects all over the civilized world. And we should endeavor to follow such examples as far as they can be adopted, in our circumstances, to promote intercourse between distant portions of the country, and to facilitate the interchange of commodities, commercial rarities, and indigenous productions, between Liberia and foreign countries. The surest and quickest, as well as the most permanent and profitable plan to evangelize and civilize Africa, is first to invite intercourse with the inhabitants. through their natural instincts, which are al ways alive to what is curious and profitable in trade. The natives will readily consent to do all the manual laber in the construction of railroads, for comparatively small pay, kind usage and enough to eat. After the completion of the roads the natives will become the best of customers, to bring the camwood palm oil, ivory, Mandingo gold, cotton, country cloths, peanuts, iron ore, hides, bullocks. sheep, goats, rice, and other things too numerous to mention, to the Liberian markets on the sea board; and thus multiply indefinitely the exportable products of the country.

I repeat that you, gentlemen of the Legis lature, are to conceive such a system of legislation upon the subject of railroads as shall make it to the interest of foreign capitalists to furnish the money, and to build up Liberia that her light may illuminate the neighboring and remote portions of Africa. Scientific men are also to be invited by the same means to survey the shortest and most appropriate route to the camwood and palm oil forests and to superintend the progress of the rail-roads, until passenger and freight trains shall have plied on them long enough to enable them to be left in the hands of skilled managers, engineers, and employes from among our own people, who can substitute their

The next item in the policy of the administration over which I have the honor and privilege to preside will be the establishment of a national banking institution, which must be founded with great care and deliberation, and a clear and distinct appreciation of the great benefits it can confer.

The Bank should be so established that its paper can be kept at par. To this end, its issues ought to be a lawful tender for everything, except duties on imports and exports, and interest on the public debt.

The National Bank ought to be one of dis count and deposit, without its allowing interest on the latter. The best paper should not be discounted at longer dates than sixty or ninety days, with grace, according to usage. None but honest, industrious, fairdealing people, who can give one or more known solvent endorsers like themselves, should be accommodated thereat. The discounted notes should always be issued upon the fixed law of the bank, to be paid in gold or silver, or any produce which may or can be exchanged at once for the equivalent sum discounted in coin, because the discounted paper on which bank bills had been paid might become complicated in a dozen transactions, all growing out of this one.

For instance, A gets his note of \$1000 discounted at ninety days, and receives bank bills for \$940. He then buys with the money rice at a low price; and subsequently sells the rice he paid \$940 for at an advance of twenty-five per cent. on the total sum, and trusts B, and takes his note at sixty days. A either takes this note to the bank and gets it discounted, or pays it to C, who gets it discounted. So the process might be continued in a manner to break any bank if such things be not guarded against. For there might be easily the sum of \$10,000 or \$12,000 growing out of a transaction of \$1000. Hence, banking must be understood in the detail of business, to be successful. For there would be, perhaps, but \$1000 among them all to pay the first sum discounted.

Banks, when not conducted by men of probity, skill, and caution, are very apt to excite a spirit of speculation and gambling. They do this by furnishing speculators with loans and discounts, by means of which they are not enabled merely, but tempted to engage in hazardous enterprises. And for a time, or while the process is going on, everything wears an air of prosperity; and those old-fashioned houses, as they are called, that carry on a legitimate business on capital of their own, are frequently undersold and driven from the market by the competition of adventurers, trading on the funds of others, ready to encounter any risk, and living in the greatest splendor. But at length the thing s overdone, the bubble bursts, the worthless machinery, fictitious bills, rediscounts, and so forth, are exposed, and the tragic comedy is wound up by the offer of a composition of some one shilling or two shillings per pound. Bankers and money-dealers who employ the money entrusted to their care in so reckless a manner, are fitter for prison than the situation they so unworthily fill. It would be a great stretch of charity to suppose that advances of the kind now alluded to can be wholly the result of imprudence. Bankers have peculiar means at their disposal by which to become acquainted with the character, position, and capabilities of those who apply to them for advances. And it is their duty to avail themselves of those means to distinguish between the careful and the improvident or reckless trader-between the man who may and the man who may not be trusted.

Money is required to carry on the banking operations. The well-being of the country, and the cause to which this administration is ocmmitted, require your legislative authority to borrow, on the best terms, just such a sum, either in gold or "greenbacks," as the Bank can use to great advantage; and no more than can be easily paid back within a given time, with all the essential conditions

annexed.

GENERAL EDUCATION. Another very important subject to which the attention of the incoming administration will be constantly directed is that of the general education of the people. This subject yields to none in importance. It will be my endeavor to secure the establishment of an efficient and practical common school system, to reach in its operations] beyond our settlements and embrace the numerous aboriginal population under our jurisdiction.

The whole Republic ought to be divided into school districts, each of which would be compelled by law to have at least one school, open nine months in every year. Parents and guardians ought to be constrained to send thereto, punctually, all children within cer-

wealth covers the ground, the necessity of tain ages. The inhabitants of every district ovght to be taxed such a per cent. on their whole property as shall furnish a sum equal to the payment of the school-master and others required to make the plan a success. This fund should be called the Common School

A distinguished American divine wrote to me two months since, that if Liberia would supplement the balance of pay towards paying females \$150 a year, he wished to furnish a hundred teachers, or the money to pay them, which would be \$15,000. I mention this to show you what value the wise and good of America put upon education, and what interest they feel in us only as we shall prove true agencies in God's hands to bring about, to the extent of our power, the regeneration

of Africa. Imagine that school-houses and churches eccupied the sites now covered by ignorance and superstition: that the natives and Americo-Liberians had, in a high degree, become civilized, enlightened, and Christianized: that the evergreen arbors of the forest had given place to the well-cultivated fields of the husbandman; that the mechanics of the various trades could find an abundance of business and ready, good money to sell their manufactures for to eager buyers; that the railroad, the ship, the merchant, the mariner, and the day laborer could be found to harmonize with and for the interest of all classes of society; that peace and plenty abounded from one end of the country to the other-what a blessing, under such circumstances, would Liberia be to this con-

To bring about these glorious results will be the constant aim of the administration to produce general content and happiness in the country by improving the condition of the masses. Let the people know that when they labor they will receive proper and reliable compensation, and there will be no lack of industry in the land. There is no incentive to exertion equal to the full possession of its rewards. Such a state of things will produce among us better men in all the relations of life-better husbands and parents and neighbors and citizens-more comfortable, more educated, more moral, and more religious. And the disadvantages and failings which beset us having been originated and aggravated by our unfortunate antecedents in America, may be seen to have been diminished and removed by an enlarged, intelligent and virtuous freedom. IMMIGRATION.

The measures which shall thus increase the happiness and exalt the character of Liberians will render our country attractive to the thousands of negroes now in exile, who are looking for some permanent home; and a healthy immigration into our country of men who will be useful and efficient cooperators in our work will be stimulated. We all admit the pressing need of civilized and Christian immigrants from abroad. For, however much the negroes in America may have been hated, and despised, and oppressed however much their manhood may have been crushed, they have, for the most part, been trained under the industrial influence of an energetic example, which their oppressors could not withhold from them. We need the benefit of that training, of that energy and industry, in this country. And if duty to their race does not suggest their exodus from the house of bondage to the land of their forefathers, we must bring to bear upon them the incentive of self-interest. It shall be the constant endeavor of the administration thus to stimulate immigration.

There was a time when we could sympathize with the intelligent colored people of the United States, in overlooking the claims of Africa upon them, on the ground that they ought, under whatever obloquy or persecution, to remain in that country in the hope of aiding their enslaved brethren. But slavery is abolished; and the cries of Africa for their assistance are as loud, if not louder, than ever. It is not for me to mark out a course for the intelligent leaders of the colored people in America; and yet I cannot but think that by no possible means could they so effec tually gain a position of respectability for the entire race as by hastening to these shores. and teaching Christianity, energy, and in-dustry to the millions of their benighted relatives.

NATIVE TRIBES. Another leading object, in conclusion, with the administration, will be the improvement and incorporation of the native tribes contiguous to us, and the formation of friendly alliances with distant and powerful tribes, who, we learn, are anxious for intercourse and amicable relations. The aborigines are our brethren, and should be entwined with our affections, and form, as soon as possible. an active part of our nationality. In fact, we cannot have a permanent and efficient nationality without them.

THE FUTURE OF LIBERIA. Fellow-citizens, I regard the Liberian nation, as sacred. God has planted us here and through all the vicissitudes of our existence His hand has been plainly visibly direct ing our affairs. God has set Liberia, as it were, upon a hill, on this continent. He has put His temple in the midst of her. He has subdued, over and over, our powerful foes. He has supplied our deficiencies, and enlightened our ignorances. He has in a thousand ways upheld us. And are we to suppose He has done all this for naught? Has He not put us here for a purpose? Is there not a career before us of civilization, of religion, and of humanity? Surely. We are here to take our native brethren by the hand, and teach them how to live, until there shall grow up on this continent a negro community, prosperous, educated, civilized, and Christian, whose voice shall be heard and respected in Europe, Asia, and America

And that this time will come I hold to be no vain prophecy, foolish as it may appear to those who are accustomed to think disparagingly of the negro. I have faith in it, cause the promise stands recorded in Holy Writ: I have faith in it, because I see already foreshadowings of its fulfilment in the progress thus far made in Liberia, in spite of occasional loiterings and backward steps.

For my own part, I must beg to be allowed to say here that I do not expect immunity from the criticisms of our opponents, nor do I ask for it; but I shall endeavor to act for the good of the people, that while allowing our opponents, in accordance with our free institutions, the utmost latitude in their criticisms of the administration, while allowing them the greatest freedom to assail us in hostile speeches they shall not be able to shake our stability by their votes. While I repudiate all intention or desire to perpetuate the administrative strength of the government by patronage, it will be my aim so to act as that I shall be able to appeal with confidence to the gratitude

and moral instincts of the people.

Liberis, fellow-citizens, must advance. She is marching on, with a providential history behind her, and a beneficent destiny before her; and wo to the man who shall seek to check her course! EDWARD J. ROYE. Monrovia, Jan. 3, 1870.

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