

hats—manufacture all our agricultural implements—all our household furniture—our woolen and cotton cloths—our wagons, carriages and harness—our barrels, baskets and brooms—our cars and locomotives—our engines and machine work of every description. Under this system of economy we would not send our rude materials one or two thousand miles to be worked up, and returned to us, with the cost of finished commodities added to that of transportation for our own use; and thus our money would not always be flowing out of the State. But they would be manufactured in our midst—the producer and artizan would be brought face to face—they would operate their several branches of industry along side of each other. What one class of operatives produced would be consumed by others, and thus their exchanges would be made upon the same theatre of action, a home market created—their money or the profits of their labor retained in the State, to be employed either in the arts and adornments of life, or in some other enterprise where it would again re-produce itself in some other form. Under no other system of operative industry has any State or people on earth ever become rich and powerful.

But the question may be asked how is this to be accomplished. The first step undoubtedly would be for the Federal Government to return to the tariff of 1842. The second, for the people of this State and for you, by your legislation, to offer every possible inducement for artizans and manufacturers to settle in our midst.

This done, the population and wealth of the State will take a new bound. It will have the effect to refine and diversify the pursuits of our people—to emancipate labor and make it free—to give to the laboring masses a feeling of moral worth—a throb of self respect—a perception of the rights, dignity and duties of their calling.

Invoking the spirit of Divine truth to crown your efforts for the public weal with success, I now take my leave of this branch of the public service.

RALPH P. LOWE.

January 9th, 1860.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

OF

SAMUEL J. KIRKWOOD,

DELIVERED TO THE

EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

OF THE

STATE OF IOWA.

DES MOINES, IOWA.
JOHN TEESDALE, STATE PRINTER.

1860.

INAUGURAL ADDRESS

SAMUEL J. KIRKWOOD

DELIVERED TO THE

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

STATE OF IOWA

THE BOOKING HOUSE
AND PRINTING OFFICE
1851

INAUGURAL.

*Gentlemen of the Senate, and
the House of Representatives :*

The people of Iowa have placed in your hands, for the time being, the law making power of the State, and therefore they look to you, that, during the time you hold this trust, such course of policy shall be pursued and such laws enacted, as will tend to promote the honor and the welfare of the State.

The office to which I have been elected, and the responsibilities which I have just assumed, associate me with you to a certain extent in this work, by imposing upon me, among other duties, that of communicating to you such information, as will aid you in the performance of your duties, and recommending to you such measures as in my opinion will, if adopted by you, advance the public welfare.

Under a government like ours, where the people are the source of all political power, the laws are necessarily a fair reflex of the intelligence and morals of the people; and therefore it becomes of the first importance that the standard of intelligence and morality should be raised as high as possible. In this view it has been the settled policy of the State to foster and encourage in all suitable ways, the education of the youths of the State, so that when at a more advanced period of life, they take part in the direction and control of public affairs, they can do so understandingly, and with an intelligent regard to the public welfare. Under our constitution the subject of education has been almost wholly withdrawn from you, and placed in the hands of a board specially constituted for that purpose, leaving with you, however, the power of revising and amending their action. This board has just closed

a session at which they have made such changes in and amendments to the school law as they deemed expedient and proper, and in my opinion it would be prudent for you to interfere with their action only in case that you shall find, upon examination, an overpowering necessity for so doing.

Not only is it highly important that the voice of our people, as expressed through the ballot box, shall be enlightened and intelligent, but it is imperatively necessary that the utterings of that voice be correctly and honestly reported. In a government like ours, without privileged classes, and where the laws affect all alike, we need not fear that a majority of our people will deliberately pursue a policy intended to operate injuriously upon the public welfare, because by so doing they would be acting contrary to their own best interests. We therefore feel at all times safe in submitting quietly and cheerfully to the will of the majority fairly and constitutionally expressed, confident that if at any time, from any cause, the people are led into error, they have the sagacity speedily to detect and the honesty promptly to correct the error. But if through fraud or violence, the ballot box shall cease to report to us correctly and honestly the will of the majority, if corrupt and interested men are enabled to substitute their will for that of the people, then the assurance of safety derived to us from the honesty, the intelligence, and the interest of the people, no longer exists,—our confidence in our government is lost, and we feel that we are at the mercy of dishonest men, who seek the control of our affairs, for the purpose of promoting their own private interests rather than the public good. We cannot therefore, guard with too much care, the sanctity and purity of the ballot box. In my opinion, there is no measure so well calculated to effect this object, as a carefully prepared and well guarded registry law; and I respectfully recommend that measure to your consideration. It may be objected by some, that the operation of such a law is burdensome to the electors. I am satisfied that the supposed difficulty in this respect, is much over-estimated, and even were it not, I cannot conceive that any elector who properly appreciates the value of the privilege he enjoys as such will deem burdensome any reasonable amount of time and attention that it may be necessary for him to bestow, in order to prevent his honest vote from being destroyed by a fraudulent one.

The institutions for the care of the insane, and for the education of the mute and the blind, will, I doubt not, receive from you prompt and cheerful attention and support. Established as they have been, in answer to the requirements of those better feelings of our nature, which prompt us to protect the weak and succor the unfortunate, you may rely with confidence upon the approval by our people, of all reasonable and proper efforts on your part to make them useful and efficient means for carrying out the noble purposes for which they were created.

I would also recommend to your favorable consideration, the State University, at Iowa city. It is based upon a grant made by the Congress of the United States to this State, for the support of such an institution, and, having accepted the grant, we are bound by a proper sense of State pride, by our duty properly to execute the trust confided to us, and by the interests of education, in which are involved the best interests of the State, to render the institution such an one as will be useful and creditable to the State.

The condition and affairs of the penitentiary, located at Fort Madison, will necessarily engage your careful and serious attention. The safety of society requires that the building be such as will afford proper facilities for the safe confinement of those vicious persons whose liberty is dangerous to the lives and property of peaceful and law abiding citizens.

An agricultural college was originated at the last session of the General Assembly, and has since been located in Story county. Agriculture will be for many years to come, as it has been in times past, that interest which underlies and supports all other interests in our State; and any aid that can legitimately be given to it, should be given generously and not grudgingly. I have not sufficient information touching this institution, to enable me to make any specific suggestions in regard to it, and can only recommend the whole matter to your careful and friendly consideration.

The present condition and future management of the permanent school fund of the State deserve your serious investigation and deliberation. Under former and existing laws, this fund has been lent to individuals, and in many cases either through the carelessness or dishonesty of the officers by whom it has been lent, the securities taken therefor have proved to be entirely inadequate, so

that large losses to the fund must ensue. By a provision of our Constitution, all these losses fall upon the State and become funded debt upon which the State must forever pay the interest. Many of the loans thus made, are now or soon will be falling due, and it becomes a matter of grave importance to determine in what manner the moneys when paid shall be again disposed of. I consider the present system open to much objection. Not only are losses of the principal constantly occurring under it, which the State is bound to make good, but even the interest is not promptly paid, so that the active fund for the support of schools is fluctuating and uncertain. I am strongly inclined to the opinion that a better policy would be to direct the payment of the principal, as it falls due, into the State Treasury, to be used as other moneys for State purposes, binding the State to pay the interest on the same for school purposes. In this way the money would, in the first instance, go to the benefit of all the people of the State alike by lessening to that extent the amount of money to be raised by taxation, and the interest would, in like manner, be paid by the people and be applied directly to their use in the support of the public schools. If this shall be deemed objectionable, I would recommend that the money when paid in, be invested either in stocks of the United States or in the best stocks of interest-paying States. In case you shall deem it proper to adopt this or a similar policy, it will be advisable to vest in the officers to whom the money shall be paid, in the first place, discretionary power to grant indulgence of time to those borrowers whose loans are amply secured, so as not to cause unnecessary hardship or distress, during our present financial difficulties.

I would also suggest to you the propriety of a careful examination of our revenue system, with a view to ascertain if it cannot be made more certain and efficient. Any system of revenue which permits large amounts of taxes to become delinquent and to be ultimately lost to the State, must be defective, and must operate unjustly and unfairly upon our people. The deficiencies thus created in the revenue must be provided for by additional taxation upon those who have already discharged their duty as citizens, by paying the taxes assessed upon them, and they are thus compelled to bear more than their due proportion of the public burden. The laws should provide for the most rigid and exact accountability of

all officers charged with the collection, control or disbursement of the public money. Any vagueness of the laws which permits an officer to retain in his hands, without detection, any portion of the public moneys, or to use them for his private benefit, not only defrauds the revenue, but introduces among officials a laxity of morals highly dangerous to the public interest. The Governor is authorized by a law passed at the last session of the General Assembly, to institute a careful examination of the accounts of the State Officers once in each year, and I have not any doubt the law will be found beneficial in its operations. But the amount of money paid by our people into the State Treasury, is but a small proportion of the total amount paid by them in the shape of taxes. A much larger amount is paid for county and other purposes, and in my opinion the existing laws are defective in not requiring a more careful scrutiny of the accounts of those to whom this money is paid and by whom it is disbursed. I therefore recommend to your consideration, in addition to any other measures your wisdom may suggest, the passage of a law requiring the Judge of each Judicial District, to appoint once in each year a skillful accountant in each county of his District, whose duty it shall be to examine carefully the books of each county officer, and to state and record an account between such officer and his county, and when necessary, between officer and officer. Such examinations by disinterested persons would, in my opinion, have a decidedly beneficial effect; the expense attending them would be very small, and I have no doubt the people of the counties would cheerfully bear that expense for the satisfaction of knowing that the large amounts of money they pay as taxes, are applied to the proper object.

I apprehend it is scarcely necessary for me to recommend to you as close and rigid an economy in the matter of appropriations as is consistent with a proper administration of the affairs of the State. The scarcity of money, consequent upon the financial revulsion of 1857, and the failure of our crops to a great extent since that time, has caused the payment of the taxes necessary to the support of our government, to be felt as a sensible burden by our people, and they have the right to demand and I think do demand at our hands, that until the present pressure is somewhat removed, and our financial affairs have become somewhat more easy and prosperous, we shall limit the expenses of the State to the smallest sum compatible with a due regard to the public interest.

An event has recently occurred in our sister State of Virginia, causing in that State an intense excitement, which has to a greater or less degree extended throughout our country. I allude, of course, to the late unlawful invasion of that State by John Brown, and his associates. The moving causes that led these misguided men to that mad attempt, in my opinion, may be easily and certainly found. On the 4th of March, 1853, President Pierce was inaugurated as the chief magistrate of a happy and united people. The administration of his predecessor had been marked by a settlement of the agitation of the question of Slavery, growing out of the acquisition of territory from Mexico, as the administration of Mr. Monroe had been marked by the settlement of a similar agitation in connection with the territory purchased from France during the Presidency of Mr. Jefferson, and as these two settlements covered all the territory then belonging to our Government, our people fondly hoped that for a long period of time, this vexed and irritating question would be kept out of our national councils, and that the angry and embittered feelings always arising from its discussion, would then die out for want of food. As an additional basis upon which to rest this hope, our people had the solemn pledge of honor of the political party then dominant in all the branches of our national government, deliberately given at the time Mr. Pierce was nominated by them for the Presidency, that if placed in power they would resist, to the extent of their power, the agitation of that dangerous question, both in the Congress of the United States, and out of it. Unfortunately for the peace of the country, and for the preservation of those kindly and fraternal feelings which should always exist among our people, Mr. Pierce and his political friends did not redeem that pledge. On the contrary, the first important act of his administration was the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, by which the settlement made during Mr. Monroe's administration of the question of slavery in the territory acquired from France, was set aside, and the fountains of strife so recently closed, again opened to pour forth among our people their bitter waters. The excuse offered for this wanton, uncalled-for and most unfortunate act was the alleged desire on the part of those who did it, to settle the question of slavery, then in a state of perfect quietude and repose, and this was to be done by introducing into our legislation a new policy which denies to Congress a power claimed for it by

the founders of our government, and exercised by it from the beginning; which declares that to be unconstitutional which the makers of the constitution declared to be constitutional, and which rests upon the strange assumption that the government of the United States cannot set up and maintain in the territories of the United States a form of government demanded by a majority of our people, and identical in the disputed particular, with the form of government of a majority of the States of our confederacy. If the men who did this thing, did not know that their action would again produce among us agitation, heartburning, jealousy, and ill-will, they were so wholly ignorant of the temper and feelings of our people, as to make them unsafe public servants. If they did know, they were unfaithful. In either view they were faithless to the pledges they had given, as the inducement for placing power in their hands. The Kansas-Nebraska bill was long pending, and its passage was strenuously resisted in Congress. The debates in that body upon it were acrimonious and exciting; the discussions in the public press were bitter and inflammatory, and when the passions of the people in the different sections of our country had been thoroughly aroused, their prejudices inflamed, and their pride enlisted in the contest going on in the halls of Congress, that contest was by the passage of the bill, transferred from these halls to the plains of Kansas; from the representatives in Congress to our entire people; and thus was cast into the arena as a prize to be struggled for by an aroused and excited people, a territory which, in size, in soil and in climate is equal to some of the most powerful monarchies of the old world. Did the men who passed that act expect and desire that struggle to be a friendly and a peaceful one? The country would fain so believe, yet such belief requires that we should attribute to them a want of knowledge and foresight but little less criminal in men in their position, than would have been the expectation and desire by them that the struggle should be as it was, a hostile and a bloody one.

It is my deliberate conviction, that on the day on which the opponents of this new and most unfortunate measure, aided by a few of its original friends, defeated its legitimate consummation by defeating the passage of the so called Lecompton bill, which sought to enforce upon the people of Kansas a constitution they abhorred and which would have required for its enforcement the aid of federal bayonets,—on that day, the union of these States

met and escaped the greatest peril to which it has yet been subjected. But happily for all, unexpectedly to the fears of many, adversely perhaps to the wishes of some, that great peril was escaped, and Kansas, with a constitution which accords with the legislation which, in the last generation dedicated her to freedom, and with the wishes of her people, stands ready to ask admission into our Union as a free State. I do not recur to these past transactions for the purpose of again stirring up ill feelings now measurably appeased, but for the light, which, in my opinion, they throw upon present events. It is as true now as it was in the olden time, that "they who sow the wind shall reap the whirlwind." During the struggle in Kansas which makes her story a blot on the page of our country's history, the free State men of that territory were treated by their pro-slavery brethren in that territory, and in the States, and by the General Government, as if they had not any rights, legal or natural, which either were bound to respect. Is it strange that some of them should have ceased to respect the rights of those whom they looked upon as their oppressors?—should have learned to hate the institution for whose advancement they were oppressed? During the same period that other new policy called fillibusterism, and the doctrines by which it is sought to be upheld, attained full force and vigor. It was insisted in substance, by our southern brethren, and either openly or tacitly approved by many in the north, that if our people should find upon our borders, or within reasonable reach of us, a weak and helpless nation, who could be attacked with comparative safety, and whose form of government did not attain to our standard of perfection, it was not only the privilege, but the mission of such of our people as desired to engage in the laudable undertaking, to invade her territory with fire and sword, to bring upon her peaceful inhabitants, men, women and children, all the horrors of war, and having thus carried through and perfected a process of "regeneration," to establish on the ruins of her government, our own free institutions, prominent among which, according to the advocates of this doctrine, stands human slavery.

Is it strange that the bare promulgation of these doctrines, acting upon the minds of men maddened by the recollection of wrongs inflicted upon them in Kansas because of their love of freedom should lead them to the conclusion that they should do and dare as much at home for liberty, as those who have oppressed them

were doing abroad for slavery? It seems to me most natural, and while I deeply deplore and most unqualifiedly condemn, I cannot wonder at, the recent unfortunate and bloody occurrence at Harper's Ferry. But while we may not wonder at, we must condemn it. It was an act of war—of war against brethren, and in that a greater crime than the invaders of Cuba and Nicaragua were guilty of, relieved to some extent of its guilt, in the minds of many, by the fact that the blow was struck for freedom, and not for slavery. Still it was a wrong, and as such the deliberate public sentiment of the north, as well as of the south, condemns it. In my opinion, much misapprehension exists on this subject among our southern brethren, and this misapprehension renders proper the present allusion to it. The mass of them relying upon the statements of the leading men of the south, who should know better, and of prominent men in the north, who do know better, but falsify for a purpose, believe that the sympathy expressed by many of our northern people for the leader of that invasion, covers and contains an approval of his act. This is a great, and it may become a dangerous error. While the great mass of our northern people utterly condemn the act of John Brown, they feel and they express admiration and sympathy for the disinterestedness of purpose by which they believe he was governed, and for the unflinching courage and calm cheerfulness with which he met the consequences of his failure. Many, very many, of our northern people felt deep sympathy for the gallant Crittenden, who died so bravely in Cuba, for an act they strongly condemned, and the tears of many of the best and bravest of our revolutionary sires bedewed the grave of Andre, who, by their own judgment, died the death of a spy, his sentence approved by Washington. When passion has passed away, and calm reason has resumed its place in the minds of our southern brethren, they will fully appreciate our feelings, and then, if I do not mistake them, while with us they condemn yet pity John Brown as a misguided but not base minded man, they will also with us detest and scorn these men in our midst who now seek by distorting our language and falsifying our sentiments, to use the passions and prejudices of our southern brethren as a means to pave their own base way to power and place.

I cannot concur in the opinion expressed by some persons, that the constituted authorities of the States of this Union have discharged their entire duty, when they have looked to and cared for

their own internal affairs, and that they travel out of their legitimate sphere when they in any manner concern themselves with the affairs of our General Government. The several States, as such, are the constituents of one branch of the National Congress, and if it be true that the constituent may and should concern himself with what is done by his representative, it must be true that each State may and should concern herself with the actions of that General Government of which her representatives are a part; if it be true that the States of our Confederacy are interested in the administration and preservation of that compact but for which they would be wholly independent and rival, perhaps hostile sovereignties, instead of one great and united nation, it must be true that they may and should concern themselves with the manner in which those to whose hands that administration and preservation are committed, discharge their trust.

The passage by Congress of the measure commonly known as the Homestead Bill, would, in my opinion, be productive of much good, preventing in a great degree the acquisition, by speculators, of large bodies of the public lands, to the injury of the actual settlers, and by enabling many honest and industrious poor men who cannot now do so, to enrol themselves in the class of independent farmers who are the support and strength of our country. The government price of a quarter section of land may appear to many a small and insignificant sum, but the many thousands of the farmers of the west who have opened farms either "in the woods" or "on the prairies," can more justly appreciate the great benefits derivable from that small amount in their work of toil and privation. I respectfully recommend that you memorialize Congress for the passage of such a law.

The building of a Railroad to the Pacific Ocean, is a measure which, in my opinion, is demanded by the best interests of our whole country. In case of war with any of the great maritime powers, the States on the Pacific would be peculiarly open to attack, and our Government could afford them the necessary aid for their defence only at great risk and enormous expense. Troops could not be sent to their assistance through our own country, except by the overland route, which experience has shown to be, for an army, almost impracticable; while if sent by any other route, they might be compelled to fight their way to the States they are sent to defend. It seems to me to be a bad policy that would compel us to

depend upon other nations for a right of way to our own possessions and our own homes, when we can have such way within our own limits.

A great central trunk route, with branches at either end to accommodate all parts of our country, both upon the Atlantic and Pacific, would meet our wants and commend itself to the sound sense and calm judgment of our people. I also recommend that you memorialize Congress in favor of that measure.

There is one aspect of the vexed and exciting question of slavery to which I wish to direct your attention as one upon which perhaps our whole country can harmonize. Recent events in Virginia have drawn the attention of our Southern brethren to the danger surrounding them, by reason of the great number of free colored persons among them in contact with their slaves, and the excitement of the moment has caused some of their State Legislatures seriously to entertain the terrible proposition to compel this unfortunate people either to become involuntary exiles from the land of their birth or to become slaves. The repugnance, the prejudice, if you will, of the people of the Free States, especially of the north-western States, against allowing any large influx of these unfortunates among them, is well known and must be heeded by those who make laws for those States. The dangers and difficulties attendant upon the presence of free colored persons in a slaveholding community, prevent emancipation by many who would otherwise gladly set free their slaves, and have in some States caused the passage of laws prohibiting or greatly hindering emancipation. Indeed these dangers and difficulties are to-day the great hindrance to the abolition of slavery in and by the Slave States, and the apprehended danger that in case the Southern States should abolish slavery, the Free States would at once be overrun by the ignorant slaves just manumitted, is skillfully used by partizan politicians among us, to reconcile the Northern mind to the extension of slavery in other directions. Moved by these considerations, I deem it my duty to recommend to your careful and favorable consideration, a plan for the colonization of the free colored population of our country in Central or South America, under the protection of our General Government, brought forward in the Congress of the United States, by a distinguished member of that body from the State of Missouri, with the view that if the measure shall meet your approbation, you may memorialize Congress in its favor. The substance

of this plan as subsequently presented in the U. S. Senate, by one of the Senators from Wisconsin, is, that our Government shall by treaty with some of the Central or South American Governments acquire "the rights and privileges of settlement and of citizenship for the benefit of such persons of color of African descent, as may voluntarily desire to emigrate from the United States, and form themselves into a colony or colonies under the laws of the State or States to which they may emigrate, the United States, in consideration of the commercial advantages of free trade with such colony or colonies making and securing the necessary and proper engagements to maintain them in the enjoyment of the rights and privileges acquired by such treaty or treaties." The colonization of this unfortunate race in some country peculiarly adapted by climate and production to their use and occupation, has long been a favorite scheme with a large portion of the people in all sections of our country, and until time and experience had shown the operations of the Society which proposed to colonize them in their native country, to be, by reason of the expense, impracticable as a means for relieving our country of the vast numbers of these people among us, that Society received, as it justly deserved, a great degree of public favor. That the operations of that Society have produced and will produce great good to Africa, I have no doubt, and I shall rejoice to see its ability for usefulness largely extended. But experience has shown it to be wholly inefficient as a means of removing from among us this large and rapidly increasing population. Colonization in Central or South America by means of the proximity of the proposed colonies, would be much less expensive, and therefore more effective, and if the General Government, supported by the several States, should take the matter in hand with earnestness and zeal, it seems to me that we might congratulate ourselves upon having done a work which would not only be productive of great good to ourselves, but also enable us to commence the payment of that vast and accumulated debt we owe this wronged and unfortunate race, and which would, perhaps, enable us to see the beginning of that most desirable end, when our land shall be in truth "the land of the free" as it has been and is "the home of the brave."

In conclusion, permit me to say that although our political horizon is not unclouded, although anger and jealousy have to some extent taken the place of brotherly kindness and good will among

our people, although some men occupying high position under our Federal and in some of our State Governments, influenced by pride and passion, utter sentiments disloyal to our Union, and others in like high position, but governed by baser motives, either openly or silently approve these sentiments; still, in my opinion, those who love our Constitution and our Union, have not very great cause for alarm. Passion will subside, reason will resume its sway, and then our southern brethren will discover that they have been deceived and misled, as to our feelings and purposes; that the people of the north, while hoping and praying for the day when no slave shall press our soil, yet do neither claim nor desire any power to interfere with slavery in any of the States where it exists; and that the good old ways wherein we walked, when to talk of disunion openly or to approve it silently, was to incur the scorn due a traitor, are ways of pleasantness, and that the good old paths our fathers taught us to tread, are paths of peace. And they will join with us in believing that the men who achieved our independence and framed our Constitution, were as true patriots, and understood the Constitution as well as the statesmen of the present day,—will unite with us in following their teachings and walking in their footsteps, and in discarding these new measures, and this new policy which have produced no fruits but those of discord and bitterness, and will again pledge themselves as we to-day pledge ourselves in the full depth and force of its meaning to the sentiment of the true and stern old patriot of the Hermitage—"The Union—it must and shall be preserved."

SAMUEL J. KIRKWOOD.