

LIBERIA HERALD,

NEW

SERIES.

(FOR OUR COUNTRY.)

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The Liberia Herald is published in Monrovia on the first and third Wednesdays in each month, at Two Dollars per annum, payable in advance.

The rates of advertising in the Liberia Herald, are,—

For a single square, one insertion, \$ 75c.
For half a square, one insertion, \$ 50c.
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Voluntary correspondence, containing interesting or important news, solicited from any part of the Republic.

No notice will be taken of anonymous communications nor will rejected communications be returned.

All communications must be addressed to "Liberia Herald."

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE.

GENTLEMEN of the SENATE

And HOUSE of REPRESENTATIVES:—

It is with the greatest pleasure that I again meet you in this new Session of the Legislature. The great purposes for which you have assembled, are first, for the redress of public grievances, and secondly, for making such laws as the general good may require.—Therefore the labors in which you are about to engage are of the most important nature, and lie at the very foundation of the future welfare and happiness of the people of this Republic.

In the various and constantly changing avocations of an industrious and intelligent people, it may often become expedient, either to make new laws, or modify or repeal old ones—and for this the constant recurrence of our elections provides, by bringing from all parts of the Republic, legislators, who have learned from the people themselves, the practical operations of old laws, and the necessity of enacting new ones.

You, gentlemen, have come thus immediately from the people, and if you consider their demands, and consult their interests, as you doubtless do, with the blessings of Divine Providence—without which no undertaking can prosper—you have little cause to fear either for your own honor or the prosperity of the government.

By our inestimable charter, in you are vested the conservation of the rights and interests of the whole people of this Republic. Whatever alteration in the laws the urgency of affairs, or the authority of the people can be conceived to justify, or render expedient—that authority is fully delegated to you; and your constituents look to you, as entrusted with their most sacred rights. I have every confidence that in general, they will cheerfully be governed by whatever your wisdom may ordain. And your zeal for the good of your fellow citizens, and your knowledge and experience in the affairs of the government, inspire, in me, the belief that your present meeting will be productive of lasting benefit to the whole people of our infant state.

According to the concise and comprehensive language of the constitution, it is incumbent on the Executive to inform the Legislature, from time to time, of the condition of the Republic, and recommend any public measures for their adoption, which he may think expedient." But before I proceed directly to the discharge of this duty, permit me, gentlemen, to remark, that every revolving year brings with it new and just occasions for our mutual congratulations and thankfulness to that beneficent Being who, in his goodness continues to favor us as a people, with such distinguished mercies,—these should create in us devout feelings of gratitude and praise.

It affords me unspeakable satisfaction to be able to inform you that during the past year, our beloved country has been greatly favored and blessed. An unusual degree of health has been dispensed to its

inhabitants;—in no previous year has greater attention been paid to agriculture; and the earth has rewarded the labors of the husbandman with abundant harvests;—the commercial operations of our merchants have been greatly extended. Indeed, the progress of general improvement, throughout the Republic, was never more encouraging than at the present time. Nothing of a very serious character has occurred to disturb the harmony of our citizens at home; or the friendly relations subsisting between this government and foreign powers, or the native tribes around us.

In the midst of these blessings, however, the government have not been altogether exempted from perplexing difficulties and embarrassments.

Some of the circumstances connected with these difficulties and embarrassments I shall recur to hereafter.

I would remark here, however, that we have no just reason to expect that our progress in national prosperity is to be uninterrupted by the evils incident to all governments. Nay, such evils are often wholesome and produce good results. The waters that stagnate, you know, corrupt. The storm that works the ocean, sometimes into a rage, renders it salutary. The rose is not without the thorn. Heaven has given us nothing unmixed.

Difficulties and embarrassments, in public affairs, frequently call forth great virtues and efforts, which would otherwise sleep in the gentle bosom of ease and quietness. They open resources which would be concealed under the inactivity of tranquil times. They arouse and enlighten the citizens. They produce a people of animation, energy, adventure, and greatness. If we consult history we shall find this to have been the case in all ages. Did not the Grecian republics prosper even amid continuing warfare? Their prosperity, their power, their splendor grew from the all-animating spirit of war.—Did not the cottages of shepherds rise into imperial Rome, the nursery of heroes,—through the invigorating operation of unceasing wars? Trace back, if you please, the history of the United States of America, and see how those states flourished and grew strong under the difficulties which surrounded, and more than once threatened the annihilation of some of them. But these very difficulties produced an exceedingly enterprising people; and hardy legions that have subsequently proved themselves equal to any emergency.

I do not wish to be understood, gentlemen, as desiring war—I pray God to deliver us, for ever, from such calamity—or difficulties or embarrassments of any kind, to incite the citizens of Liberia to greater exertion, and to call forth their latent talents and energy. There are some among us, I know, who tremble at every occurrence that in any degree threatens to interrupt the even course of our political affairs. They fear that it may put an inevitable stop to the further progress of the government, and ruin irretrievably our future happiness, and deprive us of those civil and religious blessings which the early veterans in the cause of freedom here, and ourselves have called forth from this once savage land. We may commend the anxiety of such men, however, without praising their judgment. It is true patriotism, boldly to front every difficulty;—and with a determined purpose overcome every obstacle which may oppose our progress; then we shall defend our natural and national rights, with dignity and success. With a firm trust in the Great Governor of the universe, and right on our side we have nothing to fear.

Gentlemen, with all our quick perception of the existence of public evils, to which in my years enjoyment of prosperity, and freedom has made us peculiarly sensitive, it is not easy, in a survey of the condition of the Republic, to point to any thing which justly calls for the exercise of the first of your prescribed duties; nothing, certainly, which in any other age or country would be regarded as a "public grievance."

Imperfections in our system of government, and in its operation undoubtedly exist, as well as in every other work of human hands; but its guiding and fundamental principles of freedom, justice, and equality, are unchangeably right and true, and are firmly established, not only in our written codes, but in the universal consent and affections of the people. We can have no further controversy as to the great objects and aim of political organization, or the source of its power. The sovereignty of the people is with us, a familiar, practical truth, and the happiness of the people, the only legitimate end of all civil governments.

Their unlimited and unquestioned power, prompted by an ever active spirit of inquiry and reform; and directed in its exercise by an enlightened perception of their true interest, will be sure to interpose a remedy for public wrongs before they become gross or intolerable.

In a government like ours, peculiarly situated as we are, the necessity and demand for new laws will probably never cease. The advancing tide of civilization and improvement with its attendant complications of interests, and the changes of opinion which result from the lapse of time and the light of experience, will constantly require modification and amendments of our laws to meet the varying exigencies of our condition.

There rests, therefore, upon us the obligation to see that legislation is kept in practical and harmonious conformity with the broad principles of freedom upon which are based our much cherished institutions.

Gentlemen, I have the honor to inform you that since your last meeting the territorial limits of the government have been considerably extended. On the north-west—excepting about ten miles of sea coast—the political jurisdiction of the Republic extends to the entrance of the River Shebar. This jurisdiction—comprehending the notorious Gallinas—has been regularly and formally ceded to this government by the native proprietors. The native title to the soil of several of these tracts have been extinguished—the deeds for which will be laid before you—and negotiations are now pending for the extinction of the native title to the soil of the whole of them. And I apprehend, no great difficulty in being able, soon, to bring these negotiations to a favorable termination. The principal difficulty hitherto has been the want of funds to meet the large advances demanded by the chiefs. I am happy to state that this embarrassment has been partially removed. By the Liberia Packet, in September last, the Secretary of the Treasury received, from Rev. Wm. McLean, Secretary and Treasurer of the American Colonization Society, an invoice of merchandise, amounting to Three Thousand Eight Hundred and Thirty four dollars, to aid this government in the purchase of territory. This assistance is very opportunely, and places us under renewed obligations to the friends of Liberia and of Africa, in the United States. No time shall be lost in applying this amount to the purpose for which it was granted. I beg also, to state here, that I have drawn on our good friend, S. Gorney, Esquire, London, for £500 of his donation; which bill, he writes me, will be honored.

The acquisition of the political jurisdiction over those territories is exceedingly important, in as much as it effectually abolishes the Slave Trade from this part of the African coast, and enables the government to extend a wholesome and beneficial influence over the tribes inhabiting them. And I am happy in being able to inform the Legislature that the influence of the government is already producing salutary results among the aborigines of this district. And not only these—there is evidently a great and important revolution commenced in the condition of our whole native population, which is now rapidly going forward; and only needs, on the part of the government, prompt and encouraging measures for promoting their civilization, to raise them speedily to respectability and usefulness.

This is a subject, in which I know gentlemen, you are deeply interested and concerned. The citizens of Liberia have kept steadily in view the two great objects of African Colonization—and, I believe, the principal objects which prompted the philanthropists of America in establishing colonies upon this coast,—viz: the closing of the coast of Africa against the ravages of the Slave Trade; and the best means of introducing civilization and christianity among the barbarous tribes of this continent. How far we have succeeded in effecting the first, I leave the world to judge. Of the second, gentlemen, we have yet much to accomplish; and past success, in this great and important work, should incite the government to renewed exertion.

It is very evident that the natives are improving more rapidly at present than at any previous time. There are more instances of laborious industry among them every returning year. It used to be said the natives can never acquire the habit of labor. But facts abundantly disprove this opinion. There are now numerous instances

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

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