

from undue interference, and from passing money bills not warranted by the financial condition of the country. Under white as well as black administrators an almost empty treasury has been the rule. If some financial light appears amid the gloom, it is immediately quenched by an Act of some sort about the passage of which the Secretary of the Treasury is either not consulted, or the advice tendered by him, ignored. If this was stopped I think plans could be devised enabling us to pay our way. *The man in the street cannot finance the Government.* He is ignorant of the VITAL facts.

The press of the country asks, why do we tax exports. I proceed to answer the question. Except coffee, ginger, and cocoa, our exports are all forest products which every one gathers as he feels disposed. But these are obtained on lands belonging to the State, and are an asset of great value. All States derive some revenue from their public domain. Some, a very large one. Liberia secures this branch of her revenue, by a fixed tariff collected at the places of exportation. The forests products are, as you know, of spontaneous growth. Industry, in the strict sense is not hampered. Coffee, cocoa, and ginger are not taxed. Timber and some other forest products escape taxation, although cutting of the timber decreases the value of the land.

It should be noted that the income from forest products forms more than a third of the public revenue.

CONCLUSION.

I shall now enter upon the duties of the high office assigned me.

May the Great Being, whose instruments we are, grant to us all wisdom and understanding:

I rely with confidence upon the support of the country, and of the leaders of the True Whig Party whose standard-bearer I am.

Fourteen General Elections successively won indicate that the people approve its policy and its aims.

That Party has been on the whole patriotic and unselfish.

It has not always asked that men be of their stripe. It has only required that they serve their country. It has accorded recognition to all classes of the population. It has *trebled* the revenue. It has endeavoured to increase the circulation of hard money. It has strengthened public credit, at home and abroad.

It has striven, to some extent to conciliate, do justice to, and satisfy the native population especially in Maryland County. *Within* the measure of the public means it has accorded a liberal support to the educational interests of the country. It has been tolerant toward its political opponents. It is cautiously feeling its way to a national policy in accord with the ideas of the 20th Century.

It has striven to promote the introduction of capital into the country, and this could only be done through the much decried *Concessions* whose sphere of operations has been carefully confined to the forests and waste lands, and the income from which has materially benefitted the Country.

With this great record, let us cheerfully take up the work before us. The country supports us. Let us be courageous.

Provide for the government of the native population, and their gradual inclusion into the citizenship of the country.

Let us zealously encourage agriculture. Let us accord to the European a greater measure of commercial freedom. Let us uphold and defend the cause of morality and religion. Let us be conciliatory and just to all, and so *secure* for our *beloved country* the *approbation* and *friendship* of all nations.

ARTHUR BARCLAY.

Executive Mansion,
Monrovia, January 4, 1904.

Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland State Colonization Society Papers

XV. Pamphlets (not in original collection)
18. Inaugural Address of A. Barclay, 26th
President of Liberia, January 4, 1904,
Monrovia

Monrovia, 1904