

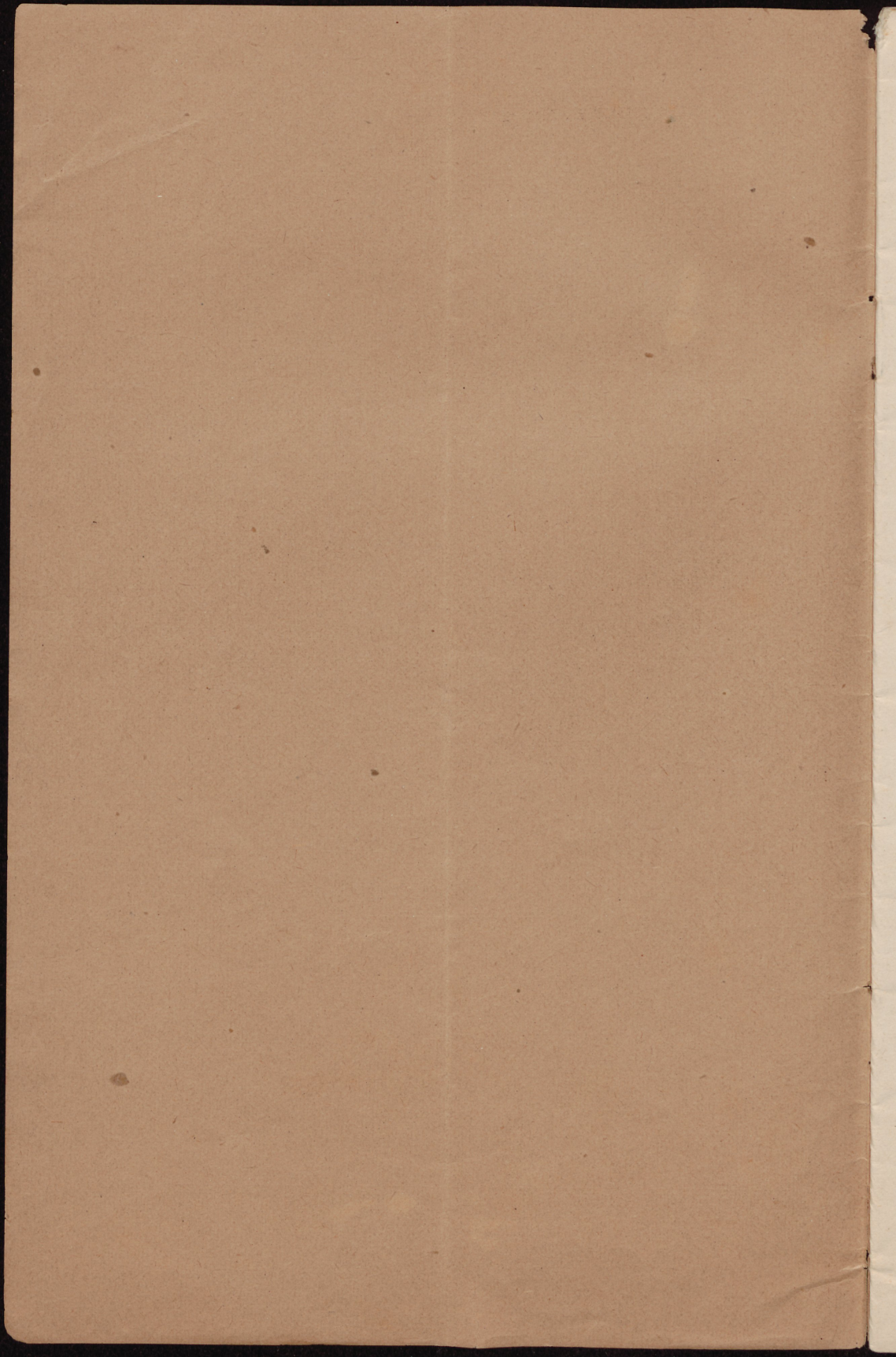
INAUGURAL ADDRESS  
OF  
GOVERNOR ELIAS CARR,

DELIVERED IN

RALEIGH, WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 1893.

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INAUGURAL ADDRESS  
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ELIAS CARR, GOVERNOR OF NORTH CAROLINA.

DELIVERED JANUARY 18, 1893.

*Gentlemen of the Assembly, Ladies and Gentlemen.*

It has been more than once asserted by my distinguished predecessors, upon occasions of this kind, that the issues of the war are dead, and that in consequence we had great reason to rejoice. No doubt appearances justified them in making these declarations, but unfortunately here, as in so many instances, the appearances were deceptive. The war issues, as was proved, were but too often like smouldering embers, and destined to initiate a general conflagration at the first wave of the partisan shirt. Notwithstanding these keen disappointments, I shall follow in the footsteps of my predecessors in this respect, and declare with them, once again, that the issues of the war ARE dead. To the making of which declaration I am led, not only by appearances, but also by the logic of events of the past two years. What a campaign we have undergone! Our old State has seen nothing like it in all its history. Certainly this is true so far as runs my own knowledge of events. And strange to say there was good reason for such work as was done. A grave doubt was expressed, not thirty days prior to the election, of North Carolina's fidelity to the principles of Jefferson. I need not review here the history of the depression of the laboring interests of the country, the means undertaken to counteract it, the organization and growth of the Farmers' Alliance,

its partial disruption and the formation of the Peoples' party, for these events are to you all well known, but suffice it to say, that what the storms of civil war and the fires of reconstruction could not accomplish, our common sufferings, a natural consequence of the long and almost uninterrupted Republican policy of greed and selfishness, easily achieved. *The misrule of that party has at last and forever cemented the union of the States*, perpetuated the power of the only truly national party that ever existed, and through the medium of our reverses we have been brought to feel our dependence, the one upon the other. Who, then, will say in the face of these facts, that out of evil no good can come? The beneficent effects of the recent Democratic victory will be felt in this country for many decades to come. Necessity has forced the people into a stubborn fight for these privileges. They have gloriously won, and truly do they deserve to enjoy those blessings that we are taught to believe must eventually come out of the fight of right and might. We have promises of great reform in the worlds of finance, agriculture and manufacturing. Verily do we need relief. The currency has been so constricted that the laborers of every section, despite affiliations and inherited prejudices, have seen the necessity for a change in policy. The vicious legislation that has characterized our finances these many years cannot be disputed. If we had no other proofs, the speeches of the American Representatives to the International Monetary Conference recently assembled in Brussels are ample. But under that great apostle of Democracy—Grover Cleveland—a brighter day seems to be dawning for the toiling masses of our Republic. Notwithstanding the hot canvass made along this line in our recent national contest, and the great hue and cry raised by the Republicans of wild-cat money, the Democratic party advocated the reestablishment of State banks, and gloriously won the right to adopt that justest of measures. No less have we a right to congratulate ourselves upon a promise of reform in the Tariff, and the absolute

annihilation of McKinleyism, a measure to which is due more than to any other the depression of agriculture, the general unrest and dissatisfaction of labor and the decay of our former powerful merchant marine. The task assigned the Democratic party is a gigantic one, for it has been delegated to undo, and that speedily, all the nefarious legislation of more than a quarter of a century. We should listen to no revolutionary sentiments in this matter of reform, but, on the contrary, let conservatism dictate our every policy. Though these changes should take place, the rights of every individual, during the process of the change, should be respected, and the general business interests of the country assiduously guarded. An extra session of Congress will expedite this work without hurrying it. It will secure ample deliberation. It will prove Democratic good faith and commend the Democracy anew to popular favor. It will bring relief to the people many months sooner than would otherwise be possible. It will give to business of every kind the notice it needs of the changes to be made in business conditions. We shall very naturally make some errors, but along this line there is little to be feared, since our leaders, in the majority of cases, are tried men, in thorough touch with the people, and the great masses nowadays are seldom wrong, certainly in this country if the principles of our government are right, viz., a government of the people for the people and by the people, then, that which they have sanctioned we should at least consider right. Their exponents, however, may and do commit errors. They are not all unanimous upon all questions because the interests of the multitudes do sometimes conflict. And just here is to be noted a sharp contrast between the two old parties which have been fighting for governmental control for the past thirty years. Our opponents are wont to accuse us of bad management, but in the accusation there is an acknowledgment of the right and justice of our claims, viz., that we are a party of the many of the people, who

have never been schooled or skilled in the art of management—so unlike our adversaries on the other hand, who, representing a few with a notorious unanimity of opinion regarding the art of money-getting, to say the least, cannot but shrewdly manage, since among them there is so little diversity of judgment or sentiment. But I shall now leave national affairs, the prospect for an early and satisfactory settlement of which seems so bright, and call your attention to those matters within the borders of our State which seem to need our especial charge.

The State is to be congratulated upon the high character of its newly-elected Assembly. It affords me great pleasure to congratulate you, Senators and Representatives, upon the great victory obtained under your local leaderships that preserved inviolate the present beneficent State and county governments.

It is the custom of an incoming administration to outline somewhat the policy, to speak of the general condition of the people, and to suggest legislation looking to an improvement or betterment.

I am sorry to say the masses of the people of North Carolina are not prosperous. We are an agricultural people. Seventy-five per cent. of our population are farmers, or are indirectly connected with farming. The conditions which have confronted us for the last four years have been peculiarly oppressive to the farmer, and as North Carolina is almost exclusively an agricultural State, we have felt the hardships as keenly, perhaps, as any other section of the Union. While the total taxable property of the State has materially increased in value, it is becoming more unequally distributed, and an investigation will exhibit that the accumulation has been in the towns and cities, while depreciation, debt and the pall of the mortgage are hanging over the agricultural districts. I am pained to say there are sections of the State where lands were considered an investment at \$25 per acre a few years ago, now being sold at \$3 to \$5



to satisfy mortgaged debts, and are not sought after by the creditor class at that. The growing unrest of the people, the fierce campaign of last fall, and the political differences even now existing, are most convincing of these facts. Our duty is to heal these differences by all honorable means, and unite our people upon all these points so necessary to the material and political welfare of our State. For more than a quarter of a century the people have watched and waited. They have seen the fruits of their labor harvested, put upon the market and eagerly bought. So great has been the demand, that to-day little or no surplus remains in sight of the chief agricultural product of this land. And yet, year by year the profits of the farm have been diminishing, until at last there is no compensation left the honest tiller of the soil. They feel, they know, that something is wrong. They cry out against unjust and unequal taxation, and protest, and justly so, against any discrimination. You, gentlemen of the General Assembly, have it in your power to work great good—to instil new hope, new life into the toiling masses. While your deliberations touching Federal taxation cannot, of course, avail much, yet it is your duty to see that as little tax as possible is imposed upon a people who are already groaning under more than they can bear. As the larger portion of the bread-winners of North Carolina are farmers, we must regard the subject of agriculture as one of vital importance to the whole State, and I therefore ask your earnest efforts and assistance for the Agricultural Department, the Experiment Station, the Agricultural and Mechanical College, and to give such substantial aid to agricultural and industrial associations as your wisdom and experience may dictate.

## GEOLOGICAL SURVEY.

The last General Assembly, wishing to add to the material wealth of the State in every possible way, saw fit in their

wisdom to re-establish the Geological Survey. This Department had been practically abandoned for years, but let us hope that in the future it may receive that care and attention from the State that the interests of the people seem to require.

#### RAILROAD COMMISSION.

A Railroad Commission was established by the last General Assembly. The high character of the three gentlemen composing this Commission was, from the first, a guarantee of its success. There are some people whose prejudice will not permit them to do justice to a corporation—especially a railroad. That may largely be attributed to ignorance. There are others who would accord corporations rights never claimed by individuals, such as exemption from taxation. This is greed and selfishness. But we are to be congratulated that these two classes are in a small minority in North Carolina to-day. The Commission, in its wisdom and justice, has increased the assessment of railroad property nearly \$8,000,000, making the total assessment now of about \$20,000,000, showing a total increase of taxes for all purposes of \$78,000. Before the establishment of the Commission, Pullman cars and steamboats were not taxed, now they are assessed at \$400,000. While it exhibits an increase in revenue, there is a corresponding decrease in passenger rates, amounting to \$200,000 per annum; and telegraph rates have been reduced at least fifty per cent. The Commission report many complaints, nearly all of which have been amicably adjusted. Looking into the Wilmington and Weldon's claims to exemption from taxation under charter, after a thorough investigation, they arrived at the conclusion that the exemption clause did not extend to the branch lines, and have been sustained in this both by our own and the Supreme Court of the United States. While in the infancy of railroads in North Carolina good reasons might have been given for exemption from taxation, the same conditions do not exist

to-day. All such roads as belong in part to the State should set the example of surrendering any exemption such road may enjoy. No species of property should be exempt save that devoted to religious, charitable and strictly educational purposes.

## EDUCATION.

Your venerable State University waxing strong once more, deserves, and I know will always command your fostering care. Regarding the State University as the head of our school system, and the colleges and high schools as its great coadjutors, there ever should be hearty co-operation between those engaged in the great work of teaching in these, and those engaged as teachers of our common schools. While we as makers, or ministers of the law, should do all in our power to build up and make more useful our University, colleges and high schools, yet our most earnest solicitude and help should go out to the common schools of our State, for it is in these that the children of the great mass of our toiling, laboring, wealth-producing people must be educated and trained, preparatory to their life-work, or not at all. It is the imperative duty of the State to provide school facilities for these children, and we can never be said to have done our duty until we have complied with the spirit of our Constitution, which commands that a school term of at least four months in the year be provided for them. Thirteen weeks, the time now provided, will not do, and we are trifling with the most vital interest of the State in longer neglecting to come up to the full measure of our duty in this matter. If upon deliberate consideration it should be found, in view of a recent decision of our Supreme Court, that another provision of our Constitution stands in the way of our levying a sufficient tax to carry on these schools of the people four months in the year, then I advise that an amendment to the Constitution be submitted to the people to take the school tax out of the constitutional limi-

tation. These schools I regard as a necessity to the children of the men and women engaged in farm life. The children of our people in cities and towns are well provided for, as a general rule, by the graded schools, and they enjoy privileges in educational matters which children living in the country do not have. An efficient common school system is the only hope of our people for an intelligent, thrifty, laboring population upon our farms, and I urge with all the earnestness I can command that our law makers shall not neglect this imperative duty resting upon them.

#### PUBLIC ROADS.

Until recently I have never been in a position to realize the deplorable condition of the public roads of the State. The present system is a failure and the roads a disgrace to civilization. But in view of the fact that a Road Congress is to assemble soon to discuss this most important matter, I shall, after its adjournment, transmit to your honorable body a special message upon this subject.

#### TAXES.

The listing, assessing, equalizing and collecting taxes is a subject fraught with great vexation to all governments, and is to-day but little nearer perfection than with the village communities of the early Aryans. There are counties in the State that raise and collect twice as much tax for local purposes as others that pay more State tax. This comes from an unequal assessment supplemented in one case by a special tax for local purposes—the State, of course, being the sufferer. I would suggest the formation of a commission similar to that created by the Legislature of 1885, looking to a proper adjustment of this great inequality. The owner of a farm, factory or workshop, who pays full taxes upon his property, cannot have a bosom filled with patriotism for a government

who permits his neighbor, the possessor of stocks, bonds and solvent credits, to go untaxed. Solve this problem, and your names will go down to posterity as the benefactors of the human race.

## ASYLUMS.

Our most excellent, the retiring Governor, has called your attention to the needs of our charitable Institutions and Homes for the unfortunate. His recommendations meet with my most hearty approval. No provision you could make, looking to the care and comfort of these unfortunates, could be beyond their deserts.

## STATE BOARD OF HEALTH.

Convinced, as I am, of the value of the work of the State Board of Health and the imminent danger our State is in from a threatened invasion of that dreaded disease, Asiatic cholera, I would suggest that, in addition to the now necessary appropriation, an additional fund be provided to meet such an emergency. This, in my opinion, is an important matter and must have your attention prior to your adjournment.

## STATE GUARD.

I desire to call your attention to the strong right arm of the Executive branch of the State Government — the State Guard. While the civil law should always be paramount, the people of North Carolina have, in peace and in war, shown themselves the earnest advocates of the supremacy of the civil law, yet experience teaches us that it is sometimes useful to have a military organization ready at hand to assist the officers of the law in enforcing obedience to the civil authorities in times of popular disturbances. The State Guard is such an organization, and, in my opinion, has served a most useful purpose in the State, and I earnestly

advise that nothing be done to discourage the patriotic, law-abiding young men of the State, who have, at no inconsiderable sacrifice to themselves, made this organization an ornament to the State.

#### STATE BANKS.

In view of the fact that the National Democratic Platform contained a plank favoring the repeal of the ten per cent. tax on State banks, and that the passage of such a measure by the next Congress is demanded, it is gratifying to know that you have already taken some action in regard to the matter looking to the establishment of State banks of issue. I cannot conceive of a new question likely to come before the General Assembly which involves more for the people of the State than this. It cannot be denied that the distribution of money among the people is inadequate to their business needs. A system of State banks well devised, would furnish this much needed local medium of exchange and a safe supplement to our National currency. I am among those who believe that there is wisdom enough in our State to devise and organize a system of State banks of issue, with such safeguards, that its bills would be equal in value to our National bank notes. While I am as hostile to any system of wild-cat banks as anyone can be, I do insist that if any of our Northern States do not need this relief from a stringency of money, that the Representatives of such State shall not undertake to constitute themselves our guardians, and vote against the repeal of the ten per cent. tax for fear that we are not able to manage our own local affairs.

#### WORLD'S FAIR.

The Legislature of 1891 appropriated out of the Direct Tax Fund the sum of \$25,000 to aid in a State's exhibit at the World's Fair in Chicago. My predecessor has held that he

could not pay out this sum, because of a possibility of its being called for by those to whom it was payable under the act of Congress under which it was turned over to the State. I have no idea the time will ever come when there will be less than \$25,000 remaining uncalled for by those entitled under said act of Congress; but to guard against such a bare possibility, I advise that the Governor be authorized to draw from the general fund in the State Treasury a sufficient sum or sums to meet any unpaid demands which would have been payable out of said \$25,000. The State should by all means be properly represented at this great World's Exposition. By the course I have suggested, it seems to me we can secure this representation for the State, and at the same time keep perfect good faith with the spirit of the act of Congress, and protect its contemplated beneficiaries.

## CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, permit me to add that having never sought office, or before held office, I am unacquainted with the routine and detail thereof, and it is with grave misgivings as to my ability to handle skillfully such matters that I enter upon the duties of this most high and honorable position to which you have seen fit to call me. Nor is the knowledge of the fact that the administration of my predecessor is considered one of the most substantial in the history of the State calculated to increase my confidence in my own abilities, but that it will act as a stimulant to greater effort and diligence on my part I cannot doubt. But let me assure you that if errors do creep in, they will be errors of the head rather than the heart.

