

O. O. Howard
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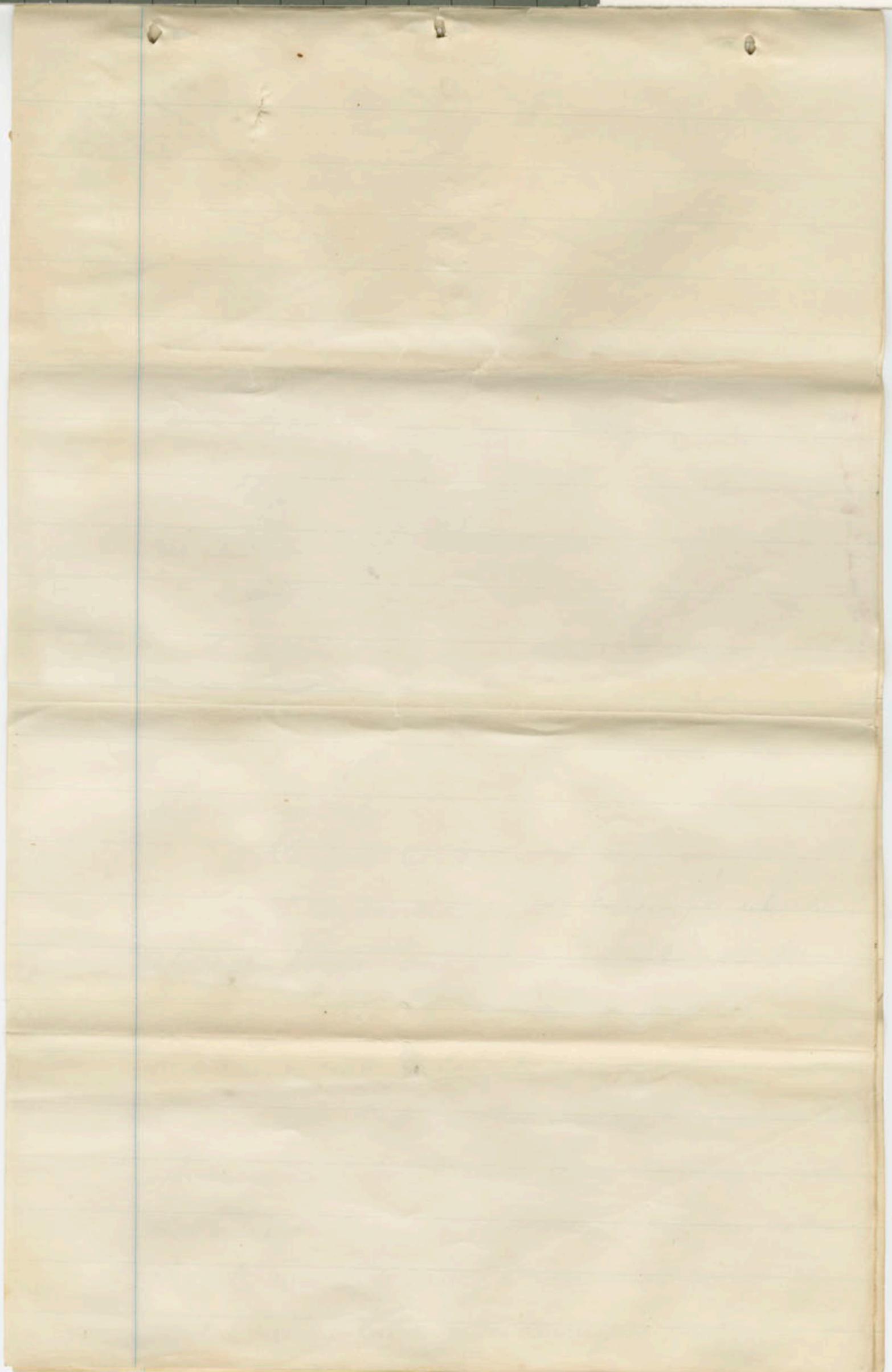
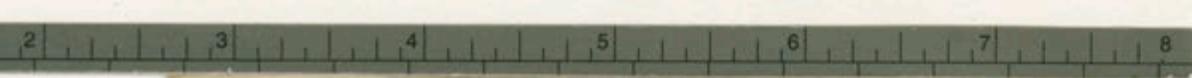
Inaugural Prayer Meeting

Among the important events connected with President Grant's inauguration, the remarkable meeting for prayer, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church last evening deserves more than a passing notice.

An Inaugural Prayer meeting was a happy thought suggested we believe by Rev. H. Stuart of Philadelphia.

It was a spontaneous gathering, needing only the suggestion and notice, and it appeared as the meeting progressed, that similar meetings were being held in other parts of the country.

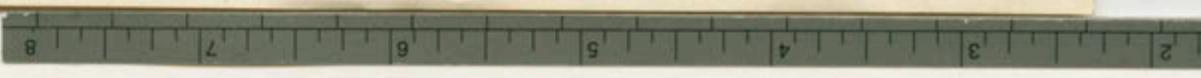
Rev. O. O. Howard, was invited to preside, and announced as the topics for which special prayer was asked in behalf the Government in all its departments, the personal piety of our rulers, that the Sabbath and sanctuary may be revered, that our laws may be just and salutary, that our nations wounds may be healed, that all who labor to evangelize men may be blessed, and that King Emmanuel may be exalted in the land and among nations.



The 100th Psalm of Praise, the 7th of
Matthew, the hymn - "Before Jehovah awful
Throne" and a fervent prayer by Rev Dr
Butter opened the meeting. Genl Howard read
from the Inaugural, calling attention to the closing
sentence, in which President Grant asked the nation
to pray for him. That is the Presidents endorsement
of this meeting. God put it into his heart before
the meeting was called or thought of.

The General spoke of his first meeting with
General Grant at Stevenson, Ala. when on his way
to Chattanooga from the Army of the Tennessee
to take Command of the Consolidated Military
Division of the West and of their interview in his
own tent at Bridgeport. When the General, alluding
to the new Command just assigned him by
President Lincoln, said that he never sought office
or promotion, for he believed, that in case of failure,
it would show that he had been flying in the face
of Providence: but when responsibility came to him,
he accepted it without fear. May not this explain
the remarkable statement in his Inaugural that
he feels the responsibility of his new station, but
accepts it without fear.

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General Howard alluded to his own custom
for sometime past to pray daily for Genl Grant
and asked that the Christians of the land should
bear him always before God. - The Coronation
Hymn - "All hail the Power of Jesus name" -
brought the audience to their feet in a hearty
Chorus.

The Chairman recognizing Mr Stuart
invited him to the front. With deep emotions, he
alluded to his own feelings during the scenes of
the day, in the Senate and on the Capitol steps.
but, when riding up the Avenue in the procession
he read the closing sentence of that address, a
request for prayers by the "President of the United
States", his heart found relief for its gladness only
in tears.

Already that inaugural is read ^{and} that
request is responded to in prayer meetings, in
churches, and at private altars, all over the land.

It is already across the waters, ^{and} has been
read in Change in London, ^{and} in many English
houses, ^{and} thousands of hearts in Europe unite with
us in the prayer "God bless our land through
the new administration. "God bless our native land"

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was the next hymn.

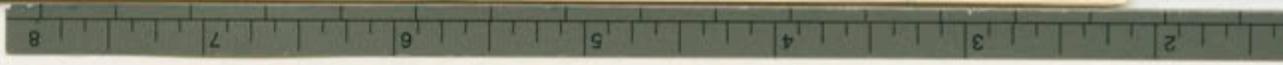
Dr Butler, pastor of the Church in which the meeting was held, was grateful to God for the Inaugural. It was brief, comprehensive, full of truth ^{and} righteousness - a great relief for the miserable twaddle and special pleading to which the Country had been treated.

As had heard that some Washington Christians had refused to come here tonight, because it was to be a political prayer meeting, just as if the most solemn ^{and} important transaction under the Sun were to be undertaken and carried on without prayer. When we are Christians enough to hold national prayer meetings on every important political question, we shall be stronger, and safer, than we are now.

The Chairman, alluding to the next hymn to be sung - a Jubilee for Freedom - said that perhaps the programme had frightened Dr Butler's friend, but that the hymn was in its place, no one could for a moment doubt who had heard the slaves in Georgia pray for Sherman's Army as it marched to the sea.

General Ekin alluded to the topic of

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prayer, that King Emmanuel may be exalted
in the land.

The Chairman spoke of a scene at an
Ohio Soldiers Asylum, where were gathered a
Company of men, who had gone blind in the
service of their Country, "It is all over the land
there are fragments of men constantly reminding
us what our nation is worth by its fearful
cost.

Rev E. P. Smith of the American Mission-
ary Association of N. Y. related an incident of
Christian Commission work along the Mississippi
river in 1863. A delegate from the North West in
giving a report of his labors for the day, spoke of
having prayed in General Grants tent, whose surprise
was expressed that he should attempt such a thing,
he said "I tell you Brethren it is the easiest
place to pray I have found in this Army"
How said the speaker when you find a man
whom it is easy to pray with, you have one that
it is easy to pray for. Let us take the thought
of General Howards, and pray every day for
President Grant, not in the general way, not merely
for him as President, but as a man, a sinner like

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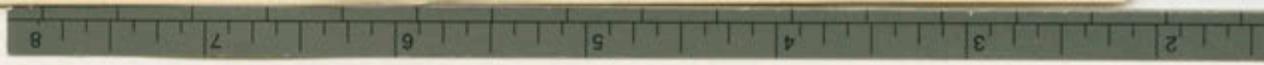
one of us who needs Christ's salvation. His prayer for us has gone all over the land that we may have peace"; now let our prayer for him never cease till he has peace - the peace of God, which a man feels when he has surrendered to King Jesus.

Major Whittle of Chicago, alluding to the prayer that our nations wounds may be healed spoke of the remarkable revival now in progress at Richmond Va, in which the principal human worker is Rev Mr Earle of Mass. All Christians in Richmond are taking part in this revival work under this leader.

At St Louis a similar work is going on ^{and} Churches which have hitherto kept entirely apart over the line of the north and south feeling are now praying and working delightfully together. That is the way to heal the wounds of bad feeling, lift up Jesus". Has he not said "If I be lifted up I will draw all men unto me".

General Grant & Howard said, it is true that our President has made it easy for us to pray for him. Has he not in the words immediately preceding his request for prayer, shown that he

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too is praying in the true Gospel spirit.

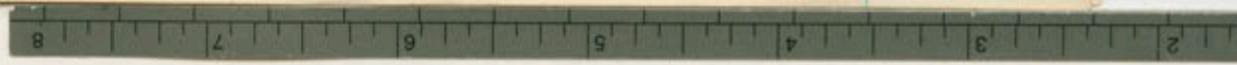
As expresses the earnest desire that such a fraternal spirit shall prevail throughout the land, as to secure a happy union. The sentiment is scriptural "the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace." The faith of Christians may well be deepened for one who cherishes this feeling of brotherhood, it strengthens our hope not only for the Country, but for the race. When men in this spirit are ready to take their fellows by the hand as brothers and lift them up.

Rev Mr Hall of the Y. M. C. A. encouraged the meeting by the fact as given to him by an old Citizen of Washington that there were never before so many earnest outspoken Christian men in Congress as now.

Rev Mr Gregory spoke of our national existence as beginning in prayer. The Constitutional Convention at Philadelphia disagreed and were about to break up, when Benj. Franklin proposed to spend an hour daily in prayer. From that day the nation began to take shape.

Dr Rust of Cincinnati prayed for the

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the poor of the land, and for a Christian life
in Pres. Grant.

A city pastor offered fervent prayer
that our President may be a model man for
our young men, especially that he may
escape the perils of our public men. that God
would help him to be an abstainer from all
that intoxicates.

Mr. Maunauaker of Phil^l. offered prayer
of thanksgiving for a Christian vice-president.

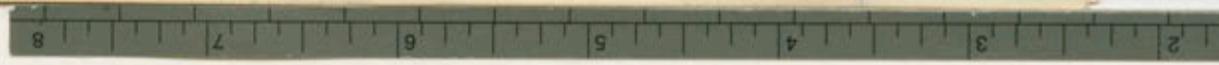
Genl Howard alluded to a fear expressed
by an English friend, Rev. Dr. Morgan, lest the
expected inaugural might take ground likely to
excite bad feeling among his people. On the contrary
the Inaugural takes the only ground on which
bad feeling can be allayed - viz. Right between
nations as between man and man.

Dr. Morgan offered prayer for the two nations
and for a bond of union among all the nations of the
earth.

Now Mr. Sales of Indianapolis spoke of
a Union prayer meeting in his City at the hour
of inauguration.

A missionary to the Indians who had

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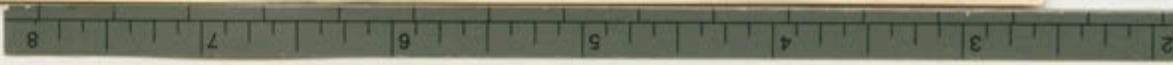
brought three of his Converts into the meeting spoke with emotion upon the President's allusion to that race. Genl Howard read with loving emphasis the President's words respecting them - "Civilization, Christianization, Citizenship." At last that race has found a President who understands them; for said he, "I have long thought the Indian was a man." The words of the General, the presence of the Indians and the missionary, and the decisive utterances of the President prepared the meeting for the next Report -

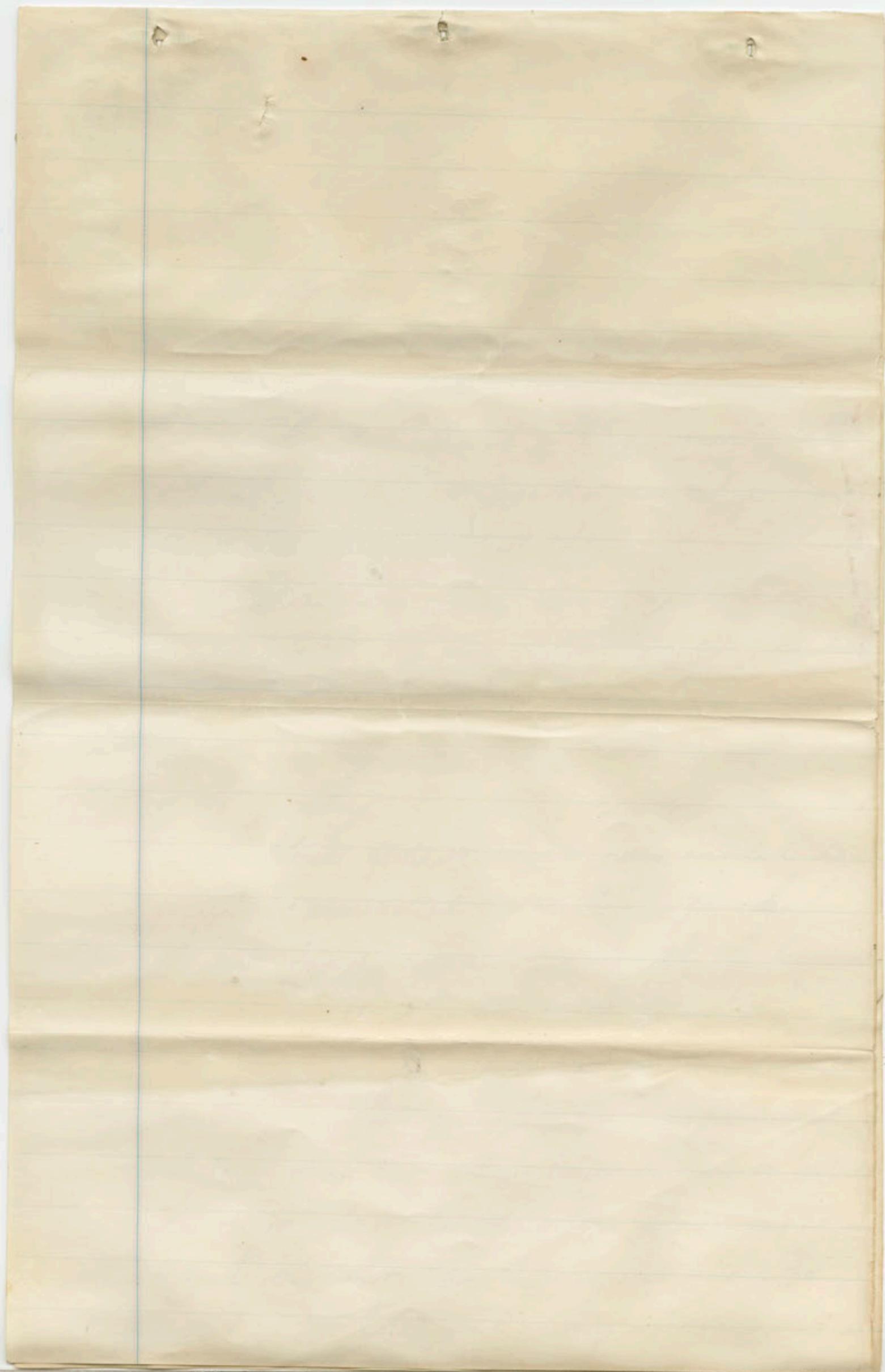
"We are rising as a people, with the changes in our land:

By special request the meeting continued beyond the hour and was closed with the doxology and a touching prayer, and benediction by Rev Dr. Austin.

This is our first Evangelical prayer meeting. Let us hope that it is itself the inaugural of a custom which shall hereafter be perpetual.

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Gen. O. B. H. presides at
Inaugural Prayers
meeting in Gen. Grant

Gen. C. H. H. "Comments"

March 1867