

# MAYOR CULVER'S INAUGURAL.

DELIVERED BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL, SATURDAY,  
APRIL 10.

*Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Common Council:*

It has pleased a majority of my fellow-citizens of Duluth to elect me as their first chief magistrate; and, in accordance with the law, we have met to inaugurate the first municipal government for our Embryo City.

I fully realize the importance of the trust that I assume in accepting the office of first Mayor of Duluth and sincerely regret that I cannot bring to it more experience and ability.

I deeply appreciate this marked testimonial of respect and confidence that has induced my friends to elevate me to this honorable position. The circumstances of my election is one particularly pleasing on the grounds that it is the result of a popular union movement wholly divested of any political phase or issue whatever—a movement that was originated by the leading men of both political parties, whose whole aim was to promote the interests and welfare of our young City, to protect and carry out all obligations to and agreeably with those who are furnishing the material aid that is developing our town, and upon whose efforts our promising future depends. It was the result of a determined combination of law and order abiding men, not seeking for loaves and fishes, nor personal aggrandizement; but whose sole object is an honest, economical system of city government.

It is to this class of our fellow citizens that we owe our preferment gentlemen, of the Council; but let us endeavor to satisfy their expectations by a faithful and impartial discharge of our duties.

In entering upon the responsibilities incumbent upon me as Mayor, I cannot refrain from expressing a feeling of distrust in my abilities; but is my fixed purpose and earnest desire to discharge those duties with an eye single to the public welfare.

Having been absent from the city the past three weeks, and the limited time that I have had at my disposal since my return yesterday, has prevented me from presenting to you at this time many important features in the Charter connected with the organization of the City government that I had desired to call your attention to, but will make them the subjects of special communications at some future time.

Among the first things, gentlemen, that should claim your attention is the questions of Finances and Taxation.

Duluth commences her existence under most auspicious circumstances. Nature has placed her at the head of navigation upon our great chain of water communication with the Atlantic, and Railroads are about to unite her with the Northwest and Pacific Ocean—she stands, admitted by all as destined to be one of the great cities of the west—and you, gentleman, as the first Council of Duluth, are placed in a position to devise a system of internal improvements for the city that will correspond with her anticipated growth. It is for you by a well digested policy to aid and assist her natural facilities.

In order to set the machinery of our municipal government in motion we must necessarily incur an expense of no inconsiderable magnitude; and in order to meet these current expenses, I would suggest for your consideration, the issuance of city bonds with coupons attached, and bearing such rates of interest as will make them attractive to our contractors and business men as an investment at home, and not be compelled to force them upon a foreign market at ruinous rates of discount. Let them also be received in payment of city taxes or assessments of every nature whatever. While we have reason to congratulate ourselves upon the rapid growth of our town, and may reasonably expect a realization of our anticipations of the splendid future that has always been entertained by its foundations, we should be watchful and jealous of our credit in the financial world, and study to make the burden of taxation as light as possible, so that when strangers come here to invest, any inquiries they may make in relation to finances and taxation may be satisfactorily answered.

I would especially call your attention to the provision of the charter empowering you to provide for conducting water into the city and contract the erection of water works and gas works. Now is the time to provide for these essential requirements so necessary to our safety, comfort and enjoyment. Our city is so situated that no difficulty arises in furnishing every part of it with good and abundant supplies of water; and in case of fires it is the great element of safety. I understand that responsible parties are ready to enter into contract with the city for the erection of wa-

ter and gas works, and with these two great desiderata supplied, a great step will be made towards our advancement.

Our harbor and dockage facilities should be matters of great regard to the Council, as it is through these our supremacy as the great City of Lake Superior must chiefly be maintained. No other than a liberal and enlightened policy with regard to this important matter, will, I am confident, be entertained by your honorable body. Cutting a canal through the Point, dredging the Bay, building the docks and piers, and the support of all means for the continuation of our Breakwater, will be satisfactory evidence that live men are engaged in building up Duluth, and that our harbor facilities can easily be made equal to any in the world.

It is apparent to you, gentlemen of the Council, that immediate steps should be taken for the securing of property sufficient to meet all demands for public buildings for the use of the city; and also to provide suitable offices for the use of the city government until such permanent arrangements can be effected.

The improvement of streets and establishing of grades thereof, are among the important subjects for your early consideration. Many persons are postponing the erection of costly and substantial improvements for want of some data to be governed by in this matter.

Great care should be taken in the selection of a suitable person to fill the office of Civil Engineer, as under our charter a grade once established, a profile thereof must be filed in the office of Register of Deeds for the county; and should the grade so established be at any time thereafter altered, all damages, costs, and charges arising therefrom, shall be paid by the city to the owner of any lot or parcel of land or tenement which may be effected or injured in consequence of the alteration of such grade. And in connection with this subject, I would draw the attention of the Council to the duties of their Street Commissioners, and the great care required, that in all these offices proper and suitable men should be selected, as the powers vested in the Street Commissioner are very ample, and would seem to require great ability as well as honesty and integrity in the office.

In the management of the Police force, (an important duty, and one for which I alone am to be held responsible,) I shall endeavor to see that the city maintains a reputation for quietude and good order. And in conclusion, gentlemen, I desire to assure you that I shall always be ready to co-operate with you in all measures calculated to promote the general interests of the City and community.