

dimensions and a spacious Lecture Room added in the rear. This property we sold in 1857 for \$20,000 and the proceeds were applied towards the expense of erecting this building in which we are assembled to-day. Thus the Lord has led us along from step to step, often through deep waters until at last we have been permitted to open the present beautiful and convenient sanctuary which we dedicated to the service of God on the last Sabbath.

[*Concluded in October number.*]

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AN ADDRESS DELIVERED BEFORE THE HAWKEYE  
PIONEER ASSOCIATION OF DES MOINES  
COUNTY, IOWA, JUNE 2D, 1858.

BY HON. CHARLES MASON.

*Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen :*

On the first day of June, 1833, the White man first set foot on the ground whereon we now stand—claiming it as his own. The former occupants, who, for centuries, had been slowly retiring before the steady progress of their more powerful neighbors, had again yielded to their destiny, and reluctantly left behind them this Great River, with the prairies and forests by which it was skirted, to follow still further the setting sun—fit symbol of the approaching extinguishment of their devoted race—and the civilized American thus obtained a foothold upon this shore, to lay the foundation of new cities, and plant the germ of another empire. We are now holding the first annual meeting of a Society organized to commemorate that event, so interesting, not only to ourselves, but to our country and to the whole world of mankind.

To you, Sir, and to most of those who now hear me, I can hardly offer any statement of facts which will be either novel or interesting. The event we celebrate is so recent in its date, that it seems to belong to the present rather than the past. The mists of forgetfulness have not yet obscured any of the

attending circumstances. So far from giving scope to the embellishments of fable, or the exaggerations of fancy, they have not yet subsided into sober, settled history. A quarter of a century seems but a short time in the recollection of an individual—still less in the history of a community. Many of those whom I now address witnessed the retiring steps of the reluctant savage, as he still lingered around the pleasant hunting grounds he was abandoning forever. Within seven years from that event every member of this Society had taken up his abode within the limits of the newly acquired Territory, where the Aboriginal foot prints had not then become erased. Men on whom the winter of age has not yet settled, who still feel the full glow of active, useful manhood, participated as adults in the event we are now commemorating. The Romulus of our city is still among us, with a fair promise of as many more years as have now elapsed since he modestly gave to the city, he and his associates were founding, not his own name, but that which then so freshly dwelt in his emigrant heart, associated with tearful recollections of the past, and of the scenes and friends of his early home.

Under these circumstances, I shall not attempt any general recapitulation of events as a matter of information. Still it will not be deemed improper to bring to your recollection some of the circumstances connected with the early settlement of this city and county, and to add such reflections as the present occasion may seem to render appropriate.

When in February, 1837, I first set foot within this city, then in the fourth year of its infancy, it was a village of some three hundred inhabitants. They occupied houses mostly of a single story and even of a single room, constructed of logs or slightly built frames. Not more than two of the whole number were composed of more substantial materials, and even these have long since vanished before the advance of superior improvement. A small opening had been made extending a few squares up and down the river, and a still less distance perpendicularly from the shore; but the hills around, now crowned with comfortable and tasteful residences, were then covered with the unbroken primeval forest. Not a church or a schoolhouse had

as yet made its appearance among us, and although the streets had received their geographical position, yet the plastic substratum of clay, which had perhaps lain dormant for hundreds of generations, had not evinced its capacity for tormenting its disturbers, and for imposing the ruling fashion which prevailed for so many years of the frequent change of sides between the leg of the boot and that of the pantaloons. Such was the unpretending condition of the town which was at that time the Seat of Government of a Territory which included what now constitutes three States and the materials of a fourth.

The condition of the rural districts was in harmonious correspondence with that of the metropolis. Skirting the timber land in most parts of the county might be seen a continuous series of incipient farms, each adorned with a settler's cabin. Occasionally, some one more adventurous than the rest had launched boldly out from the shore, where the others had nestled, into the open ocean of prairie, and had fixed his home where the storms of summer and the wintry winds might approach him on all sides, and in defiance, also, of the distance whence the materials for fire and shelter and fences were to be procured.

Public highways were then in an entirely embryotic condition. Between certain points tracks had become defined and established, but the traveler generally regulated his course across the prairies by the same rule that would have guided him over the lake or the desert. The cultivated fruits were wholly an expectancy. Like most of the other comforts and conveniences of life, they were visible only to the eye of Faith—they existed only in the regions of Hope.

The whole population of what now constitutes the entire State of Iowa, taken in the summer and early autumn of 1836, was a little upwards of *ten thousand*. In February following it was probably two or three thousand greater. The usual time requisite to send by mail to New York or Washington and obtain a reply, was ninety days, though the traveler, under favorable circumstance, might hope to make that journey in about one third of that time. I have seen a letter which

had been one year and twelve days on its pilgrimage from the city of New York to our Burlington post office.

The inhabitants within the present limits of our State were almost exclusively of the class so widely known under the denomination of squatters. Destitute of titles to their lands, they expected and received little protection from statutory enactments. But being without the law in this respect they became a law unto themselves, and I think I can safely state that I have never known justice to be meted out with more strict impartiality, or to be tempered with more genuine equity.

Such is a hasty glimpse which personal observation enables me to present; and though the recollections of many who now hear me may reach back a few years farther, still, to those who have been eye witnesses of all these events, this reminiscence will serve to call up the past in all its vividness.

Contrast for a moment this picture of the past with that afforded by a glance at the present, and tell me whether this earth has often witnessed instances of more rapid progress? Within the last twenty-one years, while the infant has been growing to the man, the population of our city and that of our State have respectively increased about fifty fold; their wealth and importance in a much greater degree. The practical distance to the seaboard cities, measured through the mails, is less than one-tenth of what it was, and not more than one-fifth to the traveller; while the telegraph has, for some purposes, effectually annihilated time and distance. The open prairie throughout our country has been transformed into a series of almost continual enclosures. The ploughshare has developed the latent fertility of the soil, intrinsically more valuable than the mines of California. Comfortable homes are scattered over its entire surface. Orchards and gardens and fields, bright with the promise of abundant harvests, are blooming in every direction. The necessaries, the comforts, and even the luxuries of life, are enjoyed by us in a degree scarcely inferior to those which the people of any of the older States can boast. Such are some of the changes which a brief retrospect of what we ourselves have witnessed enables us to realize.

Much of this improvement may be regarded as peculiar to

to this and some of the other new States. But very much is also due to the general progress which the whole human race has made within the last twenty-five years. Probably never since the creation has the world made so great a general advance within the same limit of time. That wonderful instrument, the Telegraph, has sprung into existence during that period, and given to man a faculty he never before possessed. It is not only spreading its net work of nervous sensations all over the land, but is now aiming to produce a like result over the ocean also.

Within the same time, DAGUERRE has unlocked another of the secret chambers of Nature, and drawn from thence the elements of a new art, which promises in the end to be as useful as it was astonishing. Did it not seem like enchantment when we first saw the varying lineaments of the human face transferred in an instant to the imperishable tablet, there to remain unchanged forever, and be capable of endless reproduction? And when for a thousand other purposes it has taken its place among the useful arts, who shall attempt to fix a limit to its wonderful utility?

Railroads, though invented just previously, can hardly be said to have been practically known to the world prior to 1833. They were confined to a very few localities; they have now become a common convenience, an almost daily necessity in all civilized and populous countries, giving to humanity an almost ubiquitous power, never before conceived of. Especially in the United States have they been constantly and rapidly extending themselves westward, checkering every State from the Atlantic to the Mississippi. Onward still is their note of progress, and with a bold ambition they are manifesting an unmistakable intention of overleaping the intervening rocky barriers and formidable deserts, and of connecting the two oceans by their ligaments of iron.

Within the same space of time has steam been successfully applied to Ocean navigation. The broad Atlantic is now traversed in this manner with as much regularity as the steam ferry boats ply across the Mississippi, and other seas and oceans are fast becoming witnesses of like results. That mute, sub-

missive power which has learnt to urge these floating leviathans for thousand of miles without food or rest, against winds and currents, has, in numberless other new modes since the epoch we are considering, been made implicitly subservient to the will of man. The inventive genius of our race has, in fact received a new general impulse. It has explored every portion of the wide field of human efforts, substituting the labor of machinery for the far less perfect skill of human hands, and contributing in a thousand other methods to enlarge the faculties, minister to the comfort, and advance the progress of the human race.

Even Science has not furnished an exception to the general impulse with which the great mind of Humanity has been moved since the formation of our city. Such has been the case especially with those branches which are peculiarly utilitarian in their character. Geology, for example, the most wonderful and instructive of them all, has assumed its present development within that period, opening entirely new scenes of wonder and delight, and enabling us to translate from the handwriting of the Almighty, graven on tablets of imperishable rock, the history of a thousand centuries anterior to the advent of the first human being upon this planet.

This is not the same world it seemed when our city was founded, nor is man the same being he then was. His capacities have become enlarged. He can accomplish now what would then have been entirely chimerical. He has risen one degree in the scale of being. He has commenced a new era in progress of development. If the wonders described in the Arabian tales should become realities, during the next generation, hardly will a greater change be effected than that which has taken place since the occurrence of the event we are this day commemorating. All this have we witnessed. In all this have we participated, aside from our experience in relation to the development of our own body politic, in which the world at large has not shared.

Reckoning by events and the power of accomplishing results, the days of antediluvian longevity seem almost again restored. Methusselah could not accomplish in a thousand years what we

can now complete in our brief three score and ten. I doubt whether during his whole life he saw more important changes or witnessed a more substantial progress, either physically, morally, socially, or politically, than we have done within the last twenty-five years.

We have within that time looked in upon the cradle where human institutions were in their swaddling clothes, and we have witnessed all their stages of development up to the period of their present maturity. We have practically been back to the days of the early Patriachs, and many of the changes which, in other instances, it has required three thousand years to produce, have passed successively before our own vision. We have seen society in the process of its first formation. Little by little have we beheld the elements organizing into regular order, crystalizing into forms in accordance with the laws of their being and developing progressively into higher and more perfect organizations as circumstances permitted or required.

Some of us at least have witnessed the entire absence of all the forms of civil government within our limits. More than a year elapsed after the savage had yielded to the white man before the laws of Michigan were extended over the western shore of the Mississippi. Two years later we became a portion of the Territory of Wisconsin, and the winter following, regular Territorial Courts of general jurisdiction were, for the first time, established among us. Even then, the administration of the laws was for some time extremely imperfect. Counties were organized, but their limits no one could ascertain. The course of a stream, and lines indefinitely drawn from grove to headland were all the boundaries which the circumstances of the case permitted.

[*Concluded in October number.*]

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THE PRINCE IMPERIAL.—The *Independence Belge*, speculating on the chances of Napoleon's son, now nine years of age, ever coming to the throne, recalls the remarkable historical fact that since Louis XIV. succeeded to the crown in 1643, a period of two hundred and twenty years, no son of any French monarch has succeeded to the throne.

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