

I am, sir, not much of an enthusiast, and I do not wish to deceive myself or you by an exaggerated description of what this State may attain to.

I do not think, sir, that I indulge in wild flights of fancy, when I predict here and now, that before another quarter of a century shall have rolled by, this Commonwealth will have more than 4,000,000 people; that it will be the leading agricultural State of the Union, and among the greatest in manufactures.

Here will be the center of pork and beef packing, and the imperial granary of the world; and from the banks of the Missouri, upon the borders of Kansas, streams of traffic will flow, as great and resistless as are the currents of the mighty river itself.

ADDRESS OF NOBLE L. PRENTIS.

Colonel Anthony then introduced Mr. Noble L. Prentis, as the closing speaker. Though the hour was very late, the large audience with eager interest remained to listen to the address upon the subject—

THE WOMEN OF KANSAS.

Ladies and Gentlemen: The women of Kansas, to whom we give to-night, not only the praise of our lips and the loud plaudits of our hands, but the grateful homage of our hearts, is she who sought Kansas from afar, who gave up what man resigns almost without a thought, but to woman is most dear—the home where she was born. Who left the spots her girlhood knew and loved, made precious by hope and sorrow, the altar where she was wed; the grave, perchance, of her first-born, to come to this land, then full to her gentle heart of known and of imagined terrors.

The woman we pledge to-night, whose name and fame is linked with that of Kansas in all the gathered glories of a quarter-century, is she, who, brought face to face with all that was appalling, bore it all, not with the passive, silent endurance of a slave, but with the high resolution of a heroine. Amid the noonday raid and midnight burning, she bravely stood; she heard the ruffian's oath, the Indian's yell, the wolf's hungry cry, and still she stayed by Kansas, and like Deborah, of old, prophesied the future triumphs of her people. She faced not only visible, but more terrible, because invisible, enemies. She sat pale but undaunted in her lowly home amid the parched and desolated fields, while gaunt Famine stood on the threshold or looked in at the window.

She not only saw and suffered, but she was her own and our historian. Before the destroying angel had passed, or the blood on the lintels was dry, she wrote the story down, and among the first and brightest and clearest of the many books in which the wonderful record of Kansas is set forth, is that of a Kansas woman, Mrs. Sara T. L. Robinson, who wrote all that she saw and part of which she was.

The Kansas woman was our first teacher. She is not an old woman yet, as years are counted, but she is older than the Agricultural College, or the Normal School, or the State University. She gathered the children in an academy, the walls of which were of sod and the roof of brush and earth, and taught them to spell such words as truth, liberty, freedom, independence, and instructed them in their geography that the earth revolves every twenty-four hours around its center—which is Kansas. In consideration of her services to the cause of education in those early days, the law of Kansas allows her to act as county superintendent—if she can get votes enough.

The Kansas woman has manifested at all times that highest quality of the mind, endurance of daily ills, hourly discomforts, petty and perpetual annoyances. She has lived in a dug-out; she has existed in a claim shanty, with a stove-pipe for a chimney. She has cooked without wood or coal, and she has battled with the Kansas zephyr. Every Kansas woman who has run a cooking stove with corn-stalks, straw,

or buffalo chips, or who has seen her clothes-line snatched bald a thousand times by the Kansas wind, ought to have a homestead for nothing, and a pension for life. But that same wind has developed the grace and muscle of the Kansas woman. Talk about your yachts—your Puritans and Genestas! A more inspiring sight than ocean ever saw, is a Kansas woman beating up Kansas avenue in the teeth of a roaring gale.

But the worst is over; gone are border ruffians and drouth and privation; gone danger and difficulty. The sunflowers are growing on the roof of the abandoned dug-out and within the roofless walls of the old sod house. The claim is a farm with broad green, or golden, or russet acres now. The family is sheltered in a stately mansion now. Having brought Kansas about where she wanted it, the Kansas woman is devoting attention to culture, to literature, to music, to art. She discusses all the artists from Henry Worrall to Praxiteles; all the musicians from Nevada to the piper who, according to Irish tradition, played before Moses. She belongs to the Kansas Social Science Club, and traverses the fields of human knowledge and investigation, from hired girls to the most abstruse problems of society and government. In the summer she goes to Long Branch and Saratoga, and is accompanied by her daughter, born in Kansas, a girl who has caught in the meshes of her hair the light of the Kansas sun, and in her eyes the violet shadow that girts the Kansas sky at evening. With this beauteous companion she goes about the world, blessed with that calm serenity which characterizes people who have an assured position; who do not want the earth, because they already possess all of it worth having. But if you would disturb this dignified repose; if you would see the frown of Juno, and hear something like the thunder of Jupiter, just intimate to her that Kansas is not the best country in the world, or that it was ever anything else.

It was a Kansas woman who was the first of her sex to climb to the summit of Pike's Peak. Long before there was a bridle-path—much less a railroad—she clambered on her little woman's feet over rocks, through snows, up into the rare, cold atmosphere—up higher than the bird's wing beats the air, up to the very crest, and there saw what no woman's eyes ever saw before. And to-day in Kansas song and story stands the Kansas woman. She has climbed through difficulties to the realms of the stars. Below her lower the dark clouds, and mutter the reverberating thunders of civil strife; below her are the mists of doubt and difficulty; below her are the cold snows and bleak winds of adversity; above her God's free heaven, and before her Kansas as she shall be in the shining, golden to-morrow.

LETTERS RECEIVED BY THE COMMITTEE OF ARRANGEMENTS.

FROM EX-GOVERNOR J. M. HARVEY.

LONDON BRIDGE, VIRGINIA, January 22, 1886.

Secretary of Committee of Arrangements for Quarter-Centennial Celebration—DEAR SIR: Please tender my thanks to the chairman and all the other members of the committee, for the invitation to be present and participate in the celebration.

I regret that feeble health makes it impossible to travel so far at this time of the year, but I will be with you in spirit, for I shall always rejoice in every thing that tends to the honor and prosperity of Kansas.

Very respectfully,

JAMES M. HARVEY.