

Address of the President

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us believe, but on the contrary in none of them are conditions as favorable and conducive to prosperity and happiness as in the United States.

It is true that we have more laws, for we have a higher and better civilization, and greater prosperity, and so I give my hearty approval to the work that we did in the past, and believe that the present legislature is well qualified to legislate for the people of Iowa. They have had better opportunities for education and information than did we of a former generation, and I believe are better fitted for legislative work than were we. We did the best we knew. We may have made mistakes, and possibly we did, but we acted from conscientious motives, and I believe that the present legislature is fitted for the work before it, and am confident that they will do their work faithfully and well.

ADDRESS OF THE PRESIDENT

By GEORGE W. CLARKE

I find that it was something more than twenty years ago that in an address at the State Fair Grounds I heard a distinguished speaker and lecturer, a widely known Iowan, say that the day of the pioneer in Iowa was past and that soon the last of the pioneers would be gone. Yet here we have today, twenty years after, a meeting of the Pioneer Lawmakers' Association of Iowa, very much alive, I shall assume, and having a provision in its constitution for its continual rejuvenation, which, if acted upon, insures its immortality. The Association to live its immortal life has only to have a seasonal influx of pioneers, and this has constitutional guaranty by the immortal state of Iowa in biennial sessions of the General Assembly, provided only the lawmaker, escaping the wrath of his constituents, survives his service through the dangers to which all flesh is heir, and surgical operations, for twenty years. All expectancies of life figured out by all the great insurance companies of America and Europe unite in the opinion that the influx, biennially, will be entirely sufficient to insure the immortality of the Association and of the individual pioneer. That the experience of the Association coincides with the mathematical conclusion of the companies is shown by the fact that the influx of eligible pioneers at this moment is at least forty-five. If, however, at any time through the unending cycle of years there should be danger of expiration of the Association for want of eligible, dyed-in-the-wool lawmakers, there yet remains a source of immortal eligibles consisting of all former "state officers, senators, and representatives in Congress from Iowa, United States supreme, circuit, and district judges, state boards of education, judges and district attorneys" and others, or such of them as survive the unforeseen, but inevitable risks and dangers to physical existence for a period of twenty years. They would all, of course, become pioneer lawmakers by adoption—the Association then combining in its personnel at once all the dignity, learning and rich and most highly valued experience coming from making, administering and interpreting the laws

of state and nation. The pioneer, then, has an immortality, individually and collectively in this Association, not in that he continues to make laws, but an immortality in what he has done; and that he has stood the criticism and test of at least twenty years; and this it appears, in considerable opinion, is what is meant by immortal life—immortality in deeds. This, then, is an Association of no ordinary kind. It is an Association of men selected after most careful and prayerful consideration by a free and intelligent people to serve them in the most responsible positions in their government, answering the public requirement and demand for men of the very highest grade of human stuff.

The distinguished speaker twenty some years ago at the Fair Grounds, then, seems to have been mistaken when he said the day of the pioneer is past and that the last of the pioneers would soon be gone. He, however, was evidently thinking of the early days in Iowa, rather of the first days. To be exact, however, these present days are first days in Iowa. Iowa will, for a long, long time to come still be young as years are counted in the life of states. He was thinking of cabins and sod houses far apart on the prairie. In the distance, in his imagination, he saw the smoke slowly rising from the chimney of the lonely home of the settler; he saw the covered wagon drawn by oxen, along the scarcely distinguishable trail; here and there he saw dark spots where the sod had been turned by the plow; he heard the call of the kilddeer, the clear, sharp whistle of bobwhite, the sweet, plaintive notes of the meadow lark, the loud, clear song of the bobolink; he saw flocks of wild ducks hurrying by on nervous wing and flocks of wild geese in perfect alignment and exact level of height silently sweeping on, save now and then a distinct call from the leader; he saw the line of wild pigeons stretching for miles across the sky; he heard the oom-boom-boom-boo of the prairie chicken and at night the howl of the prairie wolf; he saw on the distant horizon the dark rising cloud and saw the keen flash of the lightning and heard the deep rumble of the distant thunder and thought of the terrific storms that once swept the prairies. All these things were vivid in his imagination and aroused his thought of the courage, the hardships, the persistency, the heroism of the men and women who subdued the wilderness, who first crossed these rivers, who, as the advance of a great coming host, established the first crude shelters for families, built the first rude schoolhouses, sang the first songs of praise ever heard in the land that had been waiting for them for thousands of years. The distinguished speaker on the State Fair Grounds seeing around him on every hand evidence of great wealth and inventive genius, reflected upon a great civilization stretching from ocean to ocean, and, calling in his imagination from primal things, said in effect, the days of the pioneer are gone forever, they belong in the vanished years and the last pioneer will soon pass into the history of a most remarkable epoch. "Old things have passed away, behold all things are made new." The men that laid the foundation of these states are entitled to all credit and highest praise.

But what of the twenty or twenty-five years since that address, carefully prepared, was delivered? Prior to that time, or at least, prior to fifty years ago, epochs or eras of time were estimated in long periods of years. The era of animal transportation reached over thousands of years, from the days when Abraham dozed before his tent in Ur of Chaldea to the steam railway. We have had in this country the covered-wagon era, the construction-of-railways era, we are in the midst of the inventive, the mechanical era.

Since the address referred to, we have entered upon and are well into the era of the wireless, telephonic and telegraph communication, the era of the Diesel engine, the era of the automobile, the era of permanent highway and bridge building, the era of the navigation of the air, the era of mass production (let us hope we shall escape an era of mass destruction), the era of the submarine, the era of escape from the slow processes and hardships of many years gone by, the era of constant advancement through scientific research in all of our great institutions of learning and also sponsored by great corporate business organizations everywhere, the era of great organized research archaeologically in all parts of the earth, discovering everywhere man's existence on it and what he did multiplied thousands of years ago, the era of escape from dogmatic theology—all these and more in so brief a time and all of them have had their pioneers. None of them can enter into and become a part of our civilization without evoking some legislation as to their relation to each other and to conditions existing at the time of their advent. It always takes time for such to be settled into their just relations to the life of the people. Here and always will the pioneer lawmaker function. The pioneer has his place not alone in the covered wagon era as among the first in the wilderness or the vast open spaces of the prairies, but also in the van of our present rapidly advancing civilization. He is indeed a pioneer as he leads in fitting wise legislation to our more and more increasingly complex life. We have passed from the raw to a somewhat highly processed civilization. I think it may be said that civilization has advanced more, added more to life and satisfactory living, during the last fifty years than in the aggregate of all the centuries preceding. Man's task is with the world in the raw. He has but recently found it out and applied himself vigorously. Thousands are giving their lives in thousands of research laboratories. Archaeologists are in all the lands of the earth, sponsored and supplied with hundreds of thousands of dollars by wealthy men, to discover what life, man or other animal life, existed in former ages upon the earth and nowhere have they failed to find that man and animals existed, some many centuries ago, some millions of years ago, and evidences of their civilization or entire want of it. At the ends of the earth, daring the dangers, men are on expeditions of exploration, of discovery. Earth must give up some of her secrets, only some of them now, some of her possibilities. We have just found out that that is all the world is—just a magazine of inexhaustible possibilities. The cry is "Come on you pioneers of dis-

covery, come on you competent pioneer lawmakers to fit the discoveries from the laboratories, from the ends of the earth, fairly, justly into our highly complex modern life."

On reflection how infinitely wise does it seem that the world is just an infinite mass of possibilities. So far as the Infinite Mind is concerned it might just as well have been otherwise. But it seems to have been so ordered. Here is a possibility, take it and develop it. Electricity has been here with all its possibilities ever since the lightning flashed over Noah's ark. It had to wait thousands of years for a Franklin, an Edison and others. The law of gravitation always existed, but waited for a Newton. The properties of electricity might have been explained, it may be supposed, by the Divine Mind. So might the law of gravity. So might the power of compressed steam or air. But it was not. The coming and going of the seasons, the planetary system and the movements of the planets might have been explained, but they were not. Air waves and light waves and transmission of sound and thought instantaneously across vast stretches of land and sea might have been explained, but they were not. It just seems that not one thing was done for man that he was not or would eventually be able to do for himself. Think of it, and to illustrate: God never made an American beauty rose. All he did was to furnish the little insignificant, single-petaled rose, that grew wild by the ditches in the prairies by the pioneer homes. But in it was wondrous possibilities. It was for man to take it and develop the great American beauty rose. If he wanted different colors, yellow, pink, white, red, there were in it all the possibilities. Develop them. He never made the fine Jonathan apple or the delicious, or the bell-flower, or Rhode Island greening or any of the other fine apples. The most and best he did, it seems, was to give man the little, hard, sour, uninviting crab apple, which grew, after inexpressibly beautiful blossoming, on the little scraggly, rough-barked trees at the edge of the woods, and out of which our pioneer mothers and grandmothers made for us crab apple butter. The possibilities of all the others were in the despised crab apple. Develop them. It is up to you, O Man, if you are dissatisfied. All the possibilities are there. So with all other fruits and flowers and grains.

God did not create the great two-thousand-pound percheron horse, or the two-minute-mile trotter, or the beautiful Arabian steed. God's best horse was the little wild horse of the pampas and the plains. Again, the possibility of development. So with all our domestic animals. Given the possibility to develop. That is all. So throughout nature everywhere, an infinite storehouse of possibilities for something greater, better. What about man in such a world? Only this—that he too is a tremendous possibility. Can a greater cruelty be imagined than such a magazine of possibilities and a man without possibilities to discover and develop them? If it had not been so, man would have been of no consequence—could not have made progress. He would have been of flabby body and flabby mind. He would never have felt a single stir of ambition if

he had been fully advised of the possibilities of his world and all of them fully set in motion and the world handed over to him all fully developed and in full gear and running. How deadening. How applicable Hamlet's exclamation, "O God! How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable all the uses of this world. Fie on 't! O fie! 'Tis an unweeded garden that grows to seed; things rank and gross in nature possess it solely." So it would have been. One of man's greatest propensities is to kick, to object, but he would not have had the ambition to do even that. He would have lost instantly that propensity and that lost, he would have been forever "without God and without hope in the world."

Wisdom and infinite goodness is instantly deducible from the stored possibilities and man to deal with them, himself with possibilities capable of almost infinite growth. But can he ever exhaust the world magazine of possibilities? Impossible! What unspeakable cruelty that would be to the far-off coming man. The world's work all done! No more discoveries, no more advancement! Who would want to live in that day? What inanity! Man in despair and utter hopelessness would utter Hamlet's cry and die. But no such cruelty to the coming man can be imagined however many million years in the future he may be. "Can man by searching find out God?" Can the finite grasp the infinite? Men of thousands of years ago, looking into the heavens, exclaimed, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty!" Now, looking at the atom, comes the same exclamation.

So the world is an on-moving world, an unfolding, an emerging world. Man throughout all the ages has, little by little, been pushing back the darkness. He has been up against a solid wall of mystery gaining on it gradually, slightly. It is his mission. It is his inspiration.

So it will be even down to the last man. And the last man will have a "square deal." It will be for him to still further gain on the darkness, still further push on the emerging world. The prophet-poet, Tennyson, said eighty-five years ago:

"For I dipt into the future, far as human eye could see,
Saw the Vision of the world, and the wonder that would be,
Saw the heavens fill with commerce, argosies of magic sails,
Pilots of the purple twilight dropping down with costly bales;
Heard the heavens fill with shouting, and there rain'd a ghastly dew
From the nation's airy navies, grappling in the central blue.

* * * * *

"Knowledge comes, but wisdom lingers, and I linger on the shore,
And the individual withers, and the world is more and more.

* * * * *

"Yet I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widen'd with the process of the suns.

* * * * *

"O, I see the crescent promise of my spirit hath not set,
Ancient founts of inspiration, well thro' all my fancy yet."

And

"Far away beyond her myriad coming changes earth will be
Something other than the wildest modern guess of you and me."

And

"As we surpass our fathers' skill, our sons will shame our own,
A thousand things are hidden still, and not a hundred known."

And

"But if twenty million summers are stored in the sunlight still,
We are far from the noon of man, there is time for the race to grow.

* * * * *

In a hundred, a thousand winters? Ah what will *our* children be,
The men of a hundred thousand, a million summers away?"

And

"Man as yet is being made, and ere the crowning Age of ages,
Shall not aeon after aeon pass and touch him into shape?
All about him shadow still, but, while the races flower and fade,
Prophet eyes may catch a glory slowly gaining on the shade,
Till the peoples all are one and all their voices blend in choric
Hallelujah to the Maker 'It is finished. Man is made.'"

In all these coming changes, these coming ages, these things of the emerging world, there will be need of pilots, real pioneers and what multitudes of them there will be! No, the day of the pioneer is not past and the last one will not soon go. And pioneer lawmakers—how many, how many, indeed, there will be and how capable to wisely legislate through the coming years so as to adjust the myriad changes fairly and justly among the people of far away years!

No, I see no possibility that the Pioneer Lawmakers' Association of Iowa will expire for want of pioneers.

The Chair appointed as a committee on nomination of officers A. B. Funk, John C. DeMar, and Emory H. English. Adjournment was then made until afternoon.

The afternoon session convened at two o'clock when former Senator Thomas H. Smith delivered an address in memory of Howard Webster Byers.

ADDRESS IN MEMORY OF H. W. BYERS

By THOMAS H. SMITH

It was in the summer of 1878 that I first met H. W. Byers. He was then a country school-teacher, teaching in the vicinity of Shelby, Iowa, and had come to Harlan to attend a normal institute. I had just a short time before this located in Harlan for the practice of law. We were both young men and unmarried and became close personal friends,

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