

Mr. Abigail, San Francisco by mail in part:

Mr. Chairman, brother and sister Pioneers, dear
friends and fellow citizens: Looking backward
through the receded years, my memory sees
the old Oregon Trail, with long double
rows of slowly moving oxen, the motive
powers that propel the jolting and creaking
wheeled ships of the desert, freighted with human
beings in every stage of development, from
young infancy to hoary age, all journeying on
toward the ~~set~~ land of the setting sun. Again
I see men, women and children dropping by
the wayside, while long arrays of covered
wagons halt to bury in the solitudes of the
desert, all that is mortal of their beloved
dead. I see those that are yet alive, and
remain in the body, move monumentally
onward in danger often, in peril always, not
knowing how soon some unforeseen calamity
will overtake them as they wind their way
through lands infested by hostile savages, the
air they breathe infested with the
roadside stench of dead, decaying

cattle, their own food running low, their
clothing often worn 10 days, their bodies sunk
by alternate ^{heat} and cold & on they wander, and
go on and on. The grandeur of the scenery has
upon their wearied senses; and as one of the
another of their beloved fellow travellers is
found missing for their last long sleep among
the hands of wild beasts and wilder savages,
they are left to wonder what it all is for!
Dear friends, these trials are all for a purpose.

~~As~~ As I looked into your fading
eyes, and wrinkled faces as hundreds and
hundreds of you took me by the hand, ^{seeing} I
thought of those who have passed before
us to Elysian fields, and rejoiced as I remembered
that there is no death. Our dear ones are not
dead, but risen. We shall surely meet again.

"Heaven is nearer than mortals think.

When they look with trembling dread

At the misty future that stretches on

From the silent home of the dead.

"'Tis no lone isle in a boundless main,
No brilliant but distant shore,

Where our loving ones who are called away,
Must go, to return no more.

"No; Heaven is near us; the mighty veil
Of mortality blinds the eyes,
That we see not the glorious angel bands
On the shores of Eternity.

"I know, when the silver cord is loosed,
When the veil is rent away,
Not long and dark shall the passage be
To the realms of endless day."

My beloved pioneer sisters, or daughters, as I
 love to call you, for am older than the most
 of you, as I look into your fading eyes and
 wrinkling faces, my heart goes out once more
 to the hospitable homes of many of you,
 who welcomed me in my wanderings,
 when as a missionary of glad tidings, I
 preached to the people, heralding the
 day that dawned upon us, ^{at last,} on the 12th
 of last November, when through the
 votes of men we were made equal
 with ^{men} ^{and} ^{with} ^{one} ^{another} before the law. You
 will ^{soon} ^{depart} from us, ^{to} ^{your} ^{modern} ^{homes,}
 not only of the older times upon the plains
 and ^{of} the rude log cabins that first gave
 us shelter in the wilds of ^{Old} Oregon, ^{then} ^{found}
 mother of Washington and Idaho, but you
 will carry away in your mental vision
 the tall sky scrapers of our modern
^{city} ^{emblems} of a house not made
 with hands, eternal in the heavens.

It will not be long and perhaps till the
 last of ~~the~~ the Pioneers shall pass away. As I
 look into your faces, perhaps for the last
 time while in the body, I desire to assure
 you of the tender love I feel for one and
 all. May peace and love and care and
 plenty crown your declining years, and
 may you live to come again and again
 to these reunions, where I intend to
 come to greet you, whether in the
 body or out of it, till the last one
 of us shall be gathered home.

Col. Dr. A. Miller said, when Mrs.
 Burdick had finished, that he had
 often heard her speak, but had never
 heard her do so well before.

To which the lady replied "that's because
 you never heard me speak before as a
 free woman". The audience applauded
 to the echo.