

# ADDRESS.

BY MRS. A. S. DUNIWAY.

At the conclusion of Judge Chenoweth's address, Mrs. Duniway said that as permission had been kindly granted by the President, she would now attempt to represent the pioneer women of Oregon, a duty accepted the more cheerfully because she had already demonstrated the fact in reading Judge Chenoweth's address that a woman could sometimes represent a man. She proceeded as follows:

*Mr. President:* I have here a copy of the "Transactions of the Ninth Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association," published last year, in which I find the following testimonial from the pen of Hon. Jesse Applegate to the memory of his faithful wife, who came with him to Oregon among the first of the pioneer women who crossed the plains in wagons, and who died in April, 1881. Mr. Applegate says: "She was a safe counsellor, for her untaught instincts were truer and safer rules of conduct than my better informed judgment. Had I oftener followed her advice, her pilgrimage on earth might have been longer and happier; at least, her strong desire to make all happy around her, would not have been cramped by extreme penury."

Mr. President, we see before us the serried ranks of women who survive Cynthia Applegate, who, like her, have bravely fought the pioneer battle of life; who, unlike her and many others, as noble and self sacrificing as she and they, yet live to bear their part of life's burdens—some of whom survive their lamented husbands and are left to

"Walk the road of life alone."

I was glad, when in concluding his able and elaborate address, the distinguished ex-Senator who preceded me made favorable mention of the progress already made in Oregon, in relation to the recognition of the equal rights of women, and I deem it most appropriate to supplement his timely words of encouragement with a woman's feeble words of exhortation.

Think, gentlemen, of the many pioneer women of Oregon, who like Mrs. Ap-



plagate, have gone down to their graves in deep penury, "whose untaught instincts were truer and safer rules of conduct than the better informed judgments of men." It was a tardy recognition of a noble woman's worth that brought forth the deep wail of regret that I have quoted. But no tongue or pen can depict the hopeless anguish that wrung the heart of the bereaved husband who frankly confessed, in his hour of desolation, that "her life might have been longer and happier" if she had always been equally free and independent with himself. There was, there is, no kindler, manlier man than Jesse Applegate; and if, with his great soul and manly goodness of heart, he has been so unjust to the best and dearest friend God ever gives to man, what shall we say of the lives of many—alas, how many—other women, with husbands less noble than he, whose toll has brought them no recompense, very little appreciation and far less of liberty?

The distinguished gentleman who preceded me, alluded briefly to the memory of Samuel R. Thurston, Oregon Territory's first Representative in Congress, who succeeded in securing the passage of the Homestead Land Act in the year 1850, thereby placing this commonwealth on record as the very first in all our proud confederacy to recognize the inalienable right of woman to ownership in fee simple of other lands than those that might or might not have been bequeathed to her before marriage by gift, devise or inheritance.

The Oregon pioneers were a noble race of freemen. The spirit of enterprise that impelled them to seek these shores was a bold and free spirit; and the patient heroism of the women who accompanied them was an example as inspiring as salutary. There are lessons of liberty in the rock-ribbed mountains that pierce our blue horizon with their snow-crowned heads and laugh to scorn the warring elements of the earth and air; lessons of freedom in the broad prairies that roll away into illimitable distances; in the gigantic forests that rear their hydra heads to the very zenith and touch the horizon with extended arms; lessons of truth, equality and justice in the very air we breathe, and lessons of irresistible progress in the mighty waters that surge with irresistible power through the overshadowing bluffs where rolls the Oregon.

It is not strange that noble men living in such a country should have early learned to preach and practice the grand gospel of equal rights. And when the full history of the Oregon pioneers shall take its proper place among proud annals of the nation, the fact that equal property rights for women were among the very first of its recorded statutes while it was yet a Territory, will be recognized in its true significance.

Men of Oregon, the fact that you have taken the lead in the past in recognizing woman's equal claim with yourselves to a share in the landed domain of the



commonwealth, coupled with the significant truth that you have already granted your wives and mothers partial political recognition through legislative assemblies, emboldens us to hope, and encourages us to believe that you will go yet further; that you will not stop short of the final recognition of our free and equal right with yourselves to a full voice in the government which we are taxed to maintain and to whose laws we are held amenable. We know the incoming Legislature will proudly ratify our proposed amendment to the State Constitution. Thoughtful, intelligent men everywhere admit that our cause is just; and no man with brains enough to vote at all will deny that women will be enfranchised. But we do not forget that, after the Legislature has for the second time spoken—after the picked men of all parties have carried our work as far as they can constitutionally go, it will then be submitted, not to the people—would to God it might be—but to one-half of the people, to the voters of Oregon, by whose fiat the wives and the mothers of the men of Oregon must stand or fall. We are not afraid of the votes of wise men, moral men, intelligent, liberty-loving, progressive men; but we know, alas! that every ignorant, vicious, drunken, law-breaking or tyrannical man has a vote which counts at the polls as surely as the vote of a thinker, statesman and philanthropist. Women cannot reach the prejudiced, ignorant and vicious voting elements to educate and enlighten them. Such men consider themselves superior to these Oregon pioneers—these wives and mothers of orderly and law-abiding citizens—and we must look to the leading men of the State, like those around me, for protection from the proscriptive ballots of the lawless, ignorant and wicked hordes who presume to dictate our destiny.

Gentlemen, did you ever know a wife-beater who was a woman suffragist? Did you ever see a man who is inferior to his wife in intellect who believed that wife ought to vote? Every besotted and degraded man, every ignoramus who will sell his vote for a drink of whisky or a two-and-a-half piece; every tramp and every fugitive from justice will vote against woman suffrage every time.

But the women of Oregon have faith in the enlightened manhood of this proud young State. We believe you all echo the sentiments expressed by my friend, Senator Kelly, and that you will make the movement for woman's full and free enfranchisement so popular that it will be able to stem the current of opposition, and thus place Oregon in the lead in the great galaxy of States that will gladly follow her grand example.

A word now to the ladies present. I am told that a few of you may yet be found who say you have "all the rights you want." I know what you say, but you don't believe it; but you foolishly fancy that men will applaud you for it. I don't blame you for liking men, and honorably coveting their good



opinion. I like men myself—much better than I like women. But, let me tell you that while it may tickle their vanity—and they are just a trifle vain—to hear you make such silly speeches, they will say of you, when your backs are turned, “What a pity Miss or Mrs. So-and-so is not as intelligent as Mrs. Such-and-such, who wants to vote!” Let me tell you further, ladies, that every one of you who strives to hinder your own enfranchisement by such ridiculous insincerity of speech, will attempt to be among the very first at the ballot-box as soon as the gates that lead to the temple of liberty are opened wide for you by the grand good men who pity, even if they praise, your lack of patriotism. I have seen this experiment tried. I saw how it worked at our last school election in Portland, when many scores of ladies voted eagerly and gladly, not one in ten of whom had ever thanked—and most of them had censured—your humble speaker for knocking that the gates might be opened unto them. Ladies, if there be those among you who have made that silly declaration sometimes, you won’t make it again, will you?

In conclusion, men of Oregon, who have so patiently heeded my earnest utterance, let me exhort you to be vigilant in our cause. We trust you, we confide in you, we depend upon you to grant us the great boon of political representation under the laws of a country at whose tribunals we are tried, to whose governmental expenses we pay tribute. Surely you are not afraid to trust the mothers, wives and daughters of the pioneers with the same boon of liberty that you so highly prize for yourselves? Would a wife like Cynthia Applegate abuse the ballot? Have we not always been your best friends? Grant us equal rights with you before the law, good men and brethren, and we will do you good and and not evil, all the days of our lives.

Thanking you, Mr. President, for the honor conferred upon the pioneer women of Oregon, in thus permitting our plea to be heard, I bow and ~~retire~~, possessed of an abiding faith in the near approach of the good time coming, when the women of Oregon will become, as they of right ought now to be, free and independent.