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Eloquent Speech Delivered by the Late Dr. Ricketts

Speech Made by Representative from Douglas County
Before Joint Session Nebraska Legislature Feb-
ruary, 1895, Nominating John M. Thurston
for United States Senator

The brilliant Richard L. Metcalfe, now editor of The Omaha Nebraskan, was the efficient representative of The World-Herald at the legislative session of 1895, when Dr. Ricketts made his eloquent speech nominating

ments and the sentiments of its times. With an untrodden path before me, one unmarked by other footprints, with no beacon hung along by the hand of precedent to light my pathway, necessity forces me to yield the



THE LATE DR. M. O. RICKETTS.

the Hon. John M. Thurston. Recognizing its worth, Mr. Metcalfe sent the speech in full to his newspaper with this opening comment:

Ricketts Is a Power

It remained for Ricketts of Douglas to take the house by storm. In explaining his vote Dr. Ricketts made a speech that will be long remembered by those who heard it. He was frequently interrupted by applause. At the close the crowd cheered Ricketts right royally, and after adjournment the members crowded around to congratulate him. Dr. Ricketts spoke as follows:

Mr. Speaker: Some writer has said that 'ingratitude is a crime so base that no man charged with it has ever been found who was willing to admit his guilt,' therefore, I crave permission to make a few remarks which gratitude, the noblest of human passions, impels me at this time to make. In all ages and all times the proud race to which you belong has been prolific in its production of great men, whose tongues have been touched by the silvery wand of a magnificent eloquence with which to voice its senti-

hand of reason to that of gratitude and follow where they may lead.

"I shall spare you and this honorable body a rehearsal of the wrongs suffered by the unfortunate people which I have at this time the great honor of representing. War has with the blood of thousands of your best and bravest sons written the story of that great wrong, and in her fearful retribution the hand of justice has placed a corpse at almost every fire-side. When I look around me and see upon this floor so many men who placed their lives upon their country's altar, men who marched to the inspiring strains of the music of freedom and union, men who fought and bled all the way from Bull Run to Appomattox, that the shackles of human slavery might be stricken from millions of human beings and that they might be clothed in the robes of citizenship, I am overwhelmed by my sense of a deep and lasting gratitude. But, sir, when I reflect that when the union soldiers were unable to withstand the shock of war, when the clouds of uncertainty and doubt hung like a pall over the destinies of free government, when

the loyal heart of the nation was clothed in profound sorrow, when, sir, your flag was being trampled neath the feet of treason you called upon the Negro, who responded 200,000 strong with bare breast and brawny arm, mingling his blood with that of his patriotic white comrades for the preservation of the stars and stripes, I am encouraged in the belief that you will grant me a patient hearing.

Thirty Years of Uncertainty

"In the southland today there slumber in nameless graves 10,000 men whose rich blood was shed that a party might be born among men which would inscribe upon its banner that noble sentiment: 'A government of the people, for the people, and by the people.' The man for whom I vote is in my opinion the grandest, ablest and best living exponent of those principles, which at one time made the republican party the great party of the people. The conditions as laid down at Appomattox have never been fairly complied with and the thirty years of freedom through which my race has passed have been as one long night so cruel in its attendant circumstances as to crush from out their hearts every human passion. Did I say all? No. Hope; man's earliest, truest and best friend, the singer of lullaby songs at the cradle of his infancy, the play-fellow of his childhood, the companion of his youth, the friend and associate of his manhood, the staff of his declining years, still lives, and during all the years in which we have been robbed, whipped and murdered, our wives and daughters insulted and outraged, and in some instances for daring to defend their virtue have been stripped stark naked and before the jeering rabble of drunken men had their bare backs lashed until the blood oozed from every pore, I say, Mr. President, that even then hope lingered and whispered patience.

Stand by the Party

"There are some people who taunt my race with fanaticism and claim that out of a false sense of gratitude we blindly adhere to a certain political party. I retort, sir, that when I reflect that the republican party has made possible every step taken by my people upon the highway of human progress, clothed the humblest slave in the robes of citizenship, placed above his hut the flag, in his hand the ballot and studded his sky with the stars of hope, I am forced to the conclusion that we should be slow to fly from the evils which they say we have to others which we know not of.

Let the Bloody Shirt Wave

"If there are those in this audience today who will in the refinement of sarcasm accuse us of waving the bloody shirt I care not, for I believe that so long as there remains in this land a single mother who in the hush of night steals to her wardrobe to drop a tear upon the blue uniform worn away to the war by a dutiful son or a loving husband, so long as there remains a veteran who wears an empty sleeve or a wooden leg

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Kentucky Governor Prevents Lynching

Executive Rushes to Scene by Special Train and Quells Blood-Thirsty But Cowardly Mob.

LOCAL RACE MAN PRAISES ACT

William H. Gray Receives Letter of Appreciation From Governor Stanley Who Maintains He Only Did His Sworn Duty.

Murray, Ky., Jan. 24.—Governor Stanley made a hurried trip by special train from Paducah here, January 11 to prevent the lynching of Luke Martin, a Colored man charged with murder, and that of Circuit Judge Charles Bush and Commonwealth Attorney Denny Smith, whose lives were also threatened by the mob.

Martin is charged with the murder of a white man and had been held in the Hopkinsville jail for safe keeping. When brought here for trial he was kept in the court house all night under a heavy guard of deputy sheriffs. When the case was called counsel for the defense asked for a continuance because of the discovery of new evidence which had not been fully developed. Judge Bush granted the continuance and it was then that the court room mob rushed to the bench and threatened to lynch the judge and district attorney unless the trial was proceeded with at once.

Governor Stanley was rushed here by special train and announced that if a lynching took place they would have a chance to lynch the Governor of Kentucky first. Facing the mob, he said, "I am here to uphold the law and to protect this court, with my own body if necessary."

The blood-thirsty and cowardly mob was quelled by this brave man, who takes seriously his oath of office, and the state of Kentucky was saved from an indelible stain.

William H. Gray, of Council Bluffs, who is a native of Kentucky, wrote Governor Stanley commending him for his prompt and heroic act. He has received a letter of appreciation from Kentucky's chief executive. The letter shows Governor Stanley's modesty and the high sense of official

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POLLARD TO BE A DOCTOR

The name of Fred Pollard will live long in athletic annals. He is the newest addition to the long list of athletic stars among the young men of our race. Pollard is a native of Chicago and is twenty-one years of age. He is only five feet six and one-quarter inches high and weighs 150 pounds. He is a great hurdler as well as football player. He expects to become a physician and is laying at Brown university, Providence, R. I., the foundation for a future course in medicine.