

### THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE.

We are allowed to reproduce herewith the address which was delivered at Sioux City, Iowa, on Memorial Day of this year, by Hon. John A. Kasson, in connection with the dedication of the Floyd monument; a picturesque and scholarly presentation of the momentous happenings of one hundred years ago. Mr. Kasson said:

Fellow Citizens: The occasion which has brought this great assembly together evokes the memory of many important events in our national history. To all except the aged pioneer it seems impossible that only a century ago all the fair land we look upon from your historic bluff and all westward to the continental range of mountains was a desert and under the dominion of despotic Spain; that all the land eastward to the Mississippi, as well as all toward the setting sun was at that time, and had been for unrecorded ages, in possession of wild beasts and of savages of the human race.

#### Sergeant Floyd.

Only ninety-seven summers have passed since a roving Indian standing on this highland would have witnessed a scene altogether new and strange to him. A barge 55 feet long, having a fore-castle forward and a cabin aft, carrying twenty-two oars and a square sail, drew near this shore on its passage up the great river of the Missouri. It was accompanied by two smaller open boats, and altogether they carried about forty pale-faces, chiefly soldiers. A number of the men landed at the foot of the bluff and ascended it, bearing gently a burden which they deposited in a grave, and marked the spot with a rude cedar post. Upon its face was inscribed the name of Sergeant Charles Floyd, of the United States army, who had died that day, August 20, 1804. No priest's prayer or blessing was heard; but certain simple honors of the military service broke the sad silence of the ceremony. After this solemn act these pale-faces descended the bluff to the boats; and the barge with its pirogues moved a mile up the river into the mouth of a tributary stream, then thirty yards wide where the company camped for the night. The brilliant stars of this western firmament drew their eyes and their thoughts heavenward, whither their brave companion had just departed, and made the scene more beautiful than the day. In honor to the dead they dedicated to his memory both the burial bluff and the little river in which they were moored. Thenceforth for all time these two objects in nature shall preserve the name of their dead comrade. So does a name—a mere sound in the air—become more imperishable than any structure of human workmanship. Unaffected by flood or tempest, or war's

destructiveness, it is repeated from father to son, for all generations.

Thus prematurely died and was buried the courageous young Kentuckian. He had enlisted for a long and adventurous service which was expected to lead him along many mighty rivers, among many wild and strange tribes, and over unknown mountains, until his eyes should finally rest upon that great and distant ocean which washed the western shores of the unexplored continent. Although he perished in the earlier stage of the enterprise this lonely burial, which cut off his hopes and his career, has preserved his name and memory among mankind above that of his comrades who continued the struggle to the end, and who returned to receive the rewards voted by an appreciative congress.

#### Lewis and Clark.

President Jefferson had in the winter of 1802-3 conceived the plan of an exploring expedition up the Missouri and across the mountains to the Pacific with the view of scientific investigation and of opening trade with the Indians; and also of finding a feasible route for the limited commerce of that day across the continent. He hoped also to divert the fur trade of the northwest into the hands of Americans. He obtained an appropriation from congress of \$2,500, with which he proceeded to organize a company under the leadership of Capt. Meriwether Lewis, his private secretary, and William Clark. The details of that expedition are interesting, but are already so well known that there is no occasion to repeat them in this address. Its success was only accomplished by the exercise of all the virtues known to the life of the frontiersman. It required valor, perseverance, mutual trust, self-confidence, vigilance, knowledge of the instincts and characteristics of the savage, inventive resource, endurance, continuous toil and unlimited courage. The explorers left their camp opposite the mouth of the Missouri on May 14, 1804, and sixteen days from their departure saw the last cabin of the white man, about 100 miles from the mouth of the river. It was ninety-seven years ago this day that they bade farewell to these huts of semi-civilization. Thenceforward for many, many weary months, upward, along the endless windings and shifting sand-bars of that treacherous river, and through the gorges and over the trackless ridges of confused mountains, and down the unknown streams rushing to the Pacific ocean, abandoning their old boats and building new, in peril of starvation, in peril of drowning, in peril of wild beasts and of wily savages, they pushed their way over flooding waters and pathless forests to their desolate destination on an uncharted ocean coast, in the far region of the sunset. Every morning found them ignorant of where

their evening would be. The sun by day and the stars by night were the only familiar things of the visible universe. When in the opening of a second winter season they arrived on the bleak and desolate ocean shore at the mouth of a great river, it was only to encounter the incessant cold rains of winter, the increasing dangers of famine, and the attacks of disease. After four tedious months of waiting, beside the deserted waters of the Pacific, hoping vainly for sight of a vessel that should take their homeward messages around Cape Horn, in the third spring of their expedition they turned their steps again into the continental wilderness on their return (if God would permit it) to the land of civilization and of expectant friends.

#### The Return Journey.

Again the weary hunt for wild food, again the endless tugging at the oars up stream, again the rugged transit of mountain ranges, once more the search for new passes and new waters of navigation in the tangled web of mountains until at last in the summer of 1806 their boats were again launched upon the Missouri. Then for the first time they felt themselves truly "homeward bound." Now the swift current of the great stream which was lately their enemy became their friend. Every lapping wavelet now sang of the nearing home. The stars, ever brilliant in that clear atmosphere, now seemed to shine with increasing lustre as they rose up from the distant east, where anxious friends were awaiting the long expected tidings. Familiar scenes of old camping places appeared as they swiftly descended the river. More cheerily than on the upward voyage they now leaped into the stream to push their boat from the ever lurking, ever changing sand-bars. Instead of fifteen or twenty miles a day, as on their upward voyage, they now counted fifty, sixty, even seventy miles a day. There was little halting on their homeward course. But as they came by the bluff on which we are now standing the strong magnet of memory drew them to the shore. Once more the expedition halted at the landing that they might visit the grave of their dead comrade. They restored it to a condition of safety, and then bade the sacred deposit a long farewell. Little did they know, not one of the toil-worn heroes ever dreamed of a future scene like that we look upon today. They saw only a solitary grave-mound in a vast desert region, far away from the abodes of civilization. We behold a splendid monument commemorating the spot where they laid their comrade in his last camping ground, while jubilant thousands celebrate the brilliant deeds of the men who then sailed sadly away from the shore. They looked up stream and eastward upon a limitless solitude, stretching far away to the