

noted by geographers as the "Great American Desert." Philadelphia had no railroad connection with Pittsburg, Pittsburg none with Cincinnati or Chicago, nor any of these with St. Louis. The northwestern part of our State was known as the "Wild Cat Country," in which it was regarded as a misfortune to own land unless it was timbered and on the banks of a mountain stream; and properties in that wide section in which coal and petroleum have since been discovered, were sold every few years for taxes, because people could not afford to own land in such a cold, mountainous, unproductive, and inaccessible country.

Surely the world moves, and time does work wonders. What railroads we have you know; what railroads we are to have you only begin to suspect. In Europe during this quarter of a century dynasties and the boundaries of empires have changed, but the increase of population has been scarcely perceptible. The oppressions of the feudal past linger there and cannot be shaken off. But here, where man is free, and nature offers boundless returns to enterprise, broad empires have risen, embracing towns, cities, and States; and millions of people, born in many lands, with poverty and oppression as their only birthright, are now, as American citizens, enjoying all the comforts and refinements of civilization, and with capital rivalling that of European princes, originating and pressing forward great enterprises which are in the next quarter of a century to work more marvellous changes than any I have alluded to. Yes, ladies and gentlemen, were supernal power to unfold to our view our country as it shall be a quarter of a century hence, the most far-seeing and sanguine of us would regard the reality as a magnificent delusion. Our extension of territory and law, great as it has been, is of small consequence in comparison with the achievements of mind in the empire of science and art, whereby man is enabled to produce tenfold, and in many departments of productive industry a hundred-fold as much as he could twenty-five years ago by the same amount of labor. New roads are to be built, new towns, cities, and States to be created, new resources to be developed; and the sluggish people of the Orient are to be awakened to their own interest, and induced to contribute their vast share to the progress and commerce of the world. The vision that filled the soul of Columbus was a grand one, but that which opens to our view, and should possess and animate us, is as much grander and more beneficent as the civilization and arts of the close of the nineteenth century are superior to those of the dawning days of the fourteenth century.