

Resolved, That a copy hereof, duly executed and attested, be communicated to the family bereaved by his loss, with an expression of the sympathy of the House in that bereavement.

W. S. FRALEY,
F. J. LUND,
J. M. C. HAMILTON,
Committee.

Adopted April 14, 1913.

HON. AYLETT R. COTTON.

MR. SPEAKER—Your committee appointed to draft and present resolutions commemorating the life, character, and public services of the Honorable Aylett R. Cotton, a late member of the House of Representatives in the Twelfth and Fourteenth General Assemblies, beg leave to submit the following as their report:

Aylett Rains Cotton, the thirteenth Speaker of this House, died at San Francisco, Cal., October 30, 1912. He was a native of the county of Trumbull, Ohio, where he was born November 29, 1826. In that state he attended school. When he was seventeen years old he came with his parents to the territory of Iowa, coming to Clinton County in the year 1844. Returning east he taught school in Ohio, Tennessee and Pennsylvania. In the last named state he attended for a time Alleghany College at Meadville. Returning to Iowa after reading law, he was admitted to the bar in 1848. When the gold discoveries of that period made crowds seek California, young Cotton went there with an ox team. Remaining in that state a couple of years, he came back to Iowa. In 1851 he was elected the first County Judge of Clinton County. This office he resigned, and accepted that of Prosecuting Attorney. In 1857 the county sent him to represent her in the convention that made the present constitution of the state. In 1867 he was elected a representative in the Twelfth General Assembly, and was chosen a second time two years later. In the Twelfth, although a new member, he was put at the head of the Committee on the Judiciary. At that session the law was passed that established the Circuit Court, and along with it an Appellate Court, styled the General Term. Judge Cotton did not favor the measure, preferring another measure that was then pending, which proposed to enlarge the jurisdiction of the County Courts.

The House of Representatives, in January, 1870, made him its Speaker. In this capacity he was one of the most efficient of officers. The session was an exceptionally exciting one. It was then that the construction of the elegant building was determined on. At the close of the session the usual complimentary resolutions were adopted, but there was an exceptional interest added by the manner in which Mr. Kasson, the leader of the House on the floor, whose memory we have recalled at this session, expressed the feelings of the House towards the Speaker. Said he, in the course of his felicitous address: "We were aware at the time of election of Speaker that we

were conferring an honor in the selection of any member of this House to preside over the deliberations of this body during the present session. We are glad to recognize, at the close of the session, that the patience, forbearance and intelligence of the gentleman who was selected have enabled him to leave no feeling of enmity or hostility or anger in the breast of a single member of this House. These qualities, which have made the transaction of business on this floor so pleasant to every member, have rendered them unwilling to part from their Speaker without something further than the ordinary testimonial of their appreciation of his services. * * * They now instruct me to present to the Presiding Officer of this House, in token of their appreciation of his many excellent traits, this elegant cane, which I hold in my hand, and beg you to accept it, and with it the memory of those upon this floor, every one of whom parts with you as his friend, every one of whom wishes you a lasting and continued prosperity during the remainder of your years upon the earth." The Speaker's reply was equally graceful. In that reply, while acknowledging the graciousness of the gift and the givers, the Speaker referred briefly to the action of the Legislature. After referring to the ratification of the fifteenth amendment to the Federal Constitution, he continued (and this is of especial interest at this time): "Following this came the first expression of an Iowa Legislature in favor of admitting the sisterhood of our land into full fellowship in the government of our state. In this connection, I must not omit to mention, as among the memorable events of this session, that choice made by this House of one of its officers, whereby, for the first time, an Iowa legislative body has made public recognition of the right of woman to occupy any position for which she may be competent—a choice which we all unite in saying has proven eminently satisfactory.

"The General Assembly will also have laid the foundation of that edifice in which our successors in the General Assembly of Iowa will convene long centuries after we shall have ceased to have any concern in the affairs of life."

In the same year in which that session was held, Judge Cotton was chosen to represent the Second District in the Forty-second Congress, and in 1872 he was again chosen, but declined further service in that body. In 1883 he removed to California, where was henceforward his home.

Resolved, That the House of Representatives directs that this minute be entered on its records as a memorial and an expression of its appreciation of the work well and wisely done by this pioneer among the lawgivers of this commonwealth.

J. W. DUNLAP,
WM. J. GREENE,
JAS. KELSO, JR.

Committee.

Adopted April 16, 1913.