

RESOLUTIONS IN MEMORIAM

Adopted by the House of Representatives of the Thirty-fifth General Assembly.

HON. JOHN A. KASSON.

MR. SPEAKER—Your committee appointed to draft resolutions commemorating the life, character and public services of the Honorable John A. Kasson of Des Moines, Iowa, a late member of the House, beg leave to report the following memorial:

John Adams Kasson was born at Charlotte, Chittenden county, Vermont, January 11, 1822, and died in the city of Washington, May 19, 1910. Mr. Kasson was a descendant of James Kasson who came from the northern part of Ireland in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, and was of the Scotch-Irish stock which has furnished to America so much of its best blood and brain. James Kasson with his sons, settled on a large tract of land in the colonies of Rhode Island and Connecticut.

John A. Kasson attended the public schools of his native state; took a course at an academy, and at Burlington college. He later entered the University of Vermont, graduating therefrom in 1842. After some time spent in the law office of his brother, Charles D. Kasson, he taught school for a year in the state of Virginia. While there he saw enough of the institution of slavery to make him its enemy, an enmity that never flagged until he saw it abolished. Returning to New England, he continued the study of law, being admitted to the bar at Lowell, Mass. He then went to New Bedford where he practiced his profession for five years. Determining to go where there were greater opportunities for a young lawyer, he located at St. Louis where he acquired a large practice. After six years' residence in St. Louis, his health became impaired and in 1857 he removed to Des Moines.

Shortly after coming to Des Moines he was appointed by Governor Lowe as chairman of a commission to investigate the records and condition of the state offices. The report thereon was exhaustive and contained many valuable suggestions.

While yet at New Bedford, he went as a delegate to the national convention at Buffalo which nominated Martin Van Buren for president and Charles Francis Adams for vice-president in 1848, and which was the beginning of the Free Soil party. It is believed that Mr. Kasson survived every other person who was a member of that historic convention.

In 1860 he was a delegate to the famous Wigwam convention, which nominated Abraham Lincoln for the presidency. At that convention he

was a member of the committee on resolutions, and had a large share in framing the platform on which the victory of the party was won in that year. He was the author of the resolution that declared freedom to be the normal condition of all the territories. He also wrote the tariff plank adopted by the convention. The New York Tribune, whose editor was also a member of the committee on resolutions, gave Mr. Kasson credit for being principal author of the platform.

The first nomination made by President Lincoln after the selection of his cabinet, was that John A. Kasson for first assistant postmaster-general. The nomination was made at the suggestion of Senator Grimes and was quite unexpected by Mr. Kasson. It was during his incumbency that the railway postoffice system was permanently established. Besides attending to the details of the office, Mr. Kasson found time to revise and codify the postal laws, and to lay the basis for uniformity and great reduction of postal rates with foreign countries. He faithfully discharged the duties of the important position which he occupied.

In 1862 he was chosen the representative from the new fifth congressional district, and was re-elected to the succeeding congress. Before taking his seat in the House of Representatives, he was invited by the postmaster-general to complete some unfinished business which he had inaugurated. Shortly afterwards, the president, at the suggestion of the postmaster-general, appointed Mr. Kasson to represent the United States at a postal congress to be held at Paris. In that congress, several nations were represented. The work of the congress resulted in improving the international postal service and it has been the basis of most, if not all, of the postal treaties since made.

Mr. Kasson was made a member of the committee on Ways and Means as soon as he entered congress. The definite establishment of the national banking system was part of his work there. He supported the conscription act, favored the enrollment of negro soldiers and advocated the abolition of the franking privilege. Another measure which he advocated was the reservation of all mineral property for the men who would work the lodes. His speech in 1865 favoring the constitutional amendment abolishing slavery was pronounced by those opposed to the measure, the greatest speech that was made for the amendment.

The measures which Mr. Kasson brought forward, most of which he succeeded in getting on the statute books, demonstrate the broad statesmanship of the man.

After he retired from Congress in 1867, the department made use of his services in the negotiation of postal treaties with foreign countries, in which he was quite successful. While thus abroad, he was, without his knowledge, nominated for representative in the Twelfth General Assembly. To this position he was twice re-elected. While a member of the Iowa legislature he was largely instrumental in having the work begun for the erection of the present State House. At the adjourned session of 1873 he was chairman of the committee on the consideration of the Code of that year, and doubtless it was largely because of his ability and promptness that the work was done in the short time of thirty days.

In 1872 Mr. Kasson was again elected to congress and again in 1874. In 1877, President Hayes appointed him minister to Vienna. Returning from that court, he was again chosen to congress. In 1884 President Arthur appointed him ambassador to Germany. While there he was the nation's special envoy to the Congo conference. Four years later he attended the Samoan conference where negotiations were made entirely satisfactory to this country. President McKinley made liberal use of Mr. Kasson's services in the negotiation of treaties looking to reduce custom duties under the tariff act of 1897.

Mr. Kasson was a high minded statesman. Enduring public good was his aim. Things temporary had little attraction for him.

Therefore, be it resolved that in the death of John A. Kasson, the state and nation has been called upon to mourn the departure of a worthy, upright citizen; a great statesman and an honorable man, and

Be it further resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be printed in the Journal of the House.

FRANK S. SHANKLAND,
GEO. F. CARSON,
M. F. THOMPSON.

Committee.

Adopted April 10, 1913.

HON. WILLARD LEE EATON.

MR. SPEAKER—Your committee appointed to draft resolutions commemorating the life, character and public services of the Honorable Willard Lee Eaton of Osage, Iowa, a late member of the House, beg leave to report the following memorial:

Willard Lee Eaton, twenty-eighth speaker of the House of Representatives, died at his home at Osage, June 7, 1911. He was born in Delhi, Delaware county, Iowa, October 13, 1848, and was hence in the sixty-third year of a useful life when death claimed him. His father, Gen. Ariel K. Eaton, was a leading man in early Iowa, and was a member of this House in the Third and Fourth General Assemblies and thus took part in framing the Iowa Code of 1851. Young Eaton was educated in the common schools and Cedar Valley Seminary. In 1872 he was made LL. B. in the law department of the State University. He practiced his profession at Osage and served as county attorney of Mitchell county one term. He was mayor of Osage three terms. In 1897 he was elected to represent the county of Mitchell in the House, and was twice re-elected. In 1902 he was chosen speaker, the second native of Iowa to attain to that position. He gave eminent satisfaction as a presiding officer, as he had been useful as a member. In 1906 he was elected a member of the board of railroad commissioners, worthily performing the mixed administrative and judicial duties thereof. His labors there wore upon his health, and he willingly retired at the end of one term, soon thereafter to pass from earth.