

## ADDRESS

ON THE OPENING OF THE STEEL BRIDGE AT JEFFERSON CITY, MAY 21, 1896.

The morning breaks; an era new begun;  
Success bay-wreaths our City Jefferson;  
For lo! Proud Industry, at gladden'd rest,  
Folds quiet arms across the mighty breast  
Of old Missouri's River, and its roar  
Shall chronicle a triumph evermore.  
A span of strength, of symmetry and grace  
Sweeps o'er the vision of the populace,  
While they, rejoicing in the vict'ry won,  
With one accord exclaim: "well done@ well done!"

Well done, proud science, art, invention, skill-  
Rude Nature bows submissive to your will.  
And ye, whose worthy, self-reliant hand  
All liberal held the balance of command'  
Whose ardor was the torch that lit the way  
And promise of the triumphs of to-day;  
Whose courage stemmed the fast advancing flow  
Of obstacles long threatening to o'erthrow;  
Whose motto was "whate'er befall of ill  
To man's pure faith is naught impossible"-  
To you, well done. Nor paeans shall we raise  
To seek in vain, adulatory praise  
Your deeds to blazon: Time cannot conceal  
Aught graven on a monument of steel.  
Let but the future measure your reward;  
Let but the present humbly here record  
The noblest inspiration of its pen:  
"A country's proudest products are its men."

Now Fortune beams, and rising from,  
Hope smites the blight of the iconic  
And every man's a prophet from his birth  
To sing our city's sweetest song on earth,  
And every man beyond his laurels won  
Sees further trophies o'er a Rubicon.  
For end is not to valor's enterprise-  
"Hills peep o'er hills and Alps on Alps arise"-  
But "each succeeding day out-writes the last  
Is sealed upon the archives of the past.

Loved Jefferson – among thy hundred hills:

Thy name e'en whispered patriotism thrills,  
Thou of a commonwealth imperial, free,  
Fit Capital art framed, and thus shall be  
Till he, the statesman, whose beloved name  
Thine own hon'r is – till he no longer claim  
Missouri's gratitude, her praise and love,  
And in Columbia's bosom cease to move  
Of Freedom's living flame and moulder low  
The torch of Truth and Honor's beacon glow.

Till Time, mute mocker of man's power and skill  
High arbiter of fortune, good and ill,  
Beneath whose touch the strongest citadel  
In ruin sinks and crumbles as a shell,  
With all the temples that the nations rear-  
Till Time shall mete destruction and this sphere  
Is shivered in convulsions thou'rt secure-  
Built on a rock, foundation firm and sure,  
Strong pillar'd by the hills and none the less  
By a free people's faith and sturdiness.

Well-chosen and incomparable site:  
The grand, sublime, the picturesque and bright-  
Embellishments from Nature's hand benign-  
All softly blend, co-mingle and combine  
To make a scene – the loveliest and best-  
The eye to please and fancy to arrest,  
Secure against the guilt and glare and vice  
And Tumult of the great metropolis:  
Most fitting site, and worthiest of all  
To proudly bear Missouri's Capitol.

Thy walls, fair city, listened to the tread  
Of men who made our history, and led  
In battle, legislation, justice, law,  
Whose names inspire love, reverence and awe.  
The voices of Blair, Benton, Napton, Scott  
Still speak, their spirits live, tho' they are not.  
And brighter yet – unyielding to the years-  
While sycophants their ignoble careers  
Ignobly end, and tyrants of a day  
Forgot, low mingle with their kindred clay-  
Such noble, starry characters shall light  
And point the way to glory and the right.  
Thus memories clust-ring round thee make each scene  
Awake the past and bid it breath again.

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Blest band of steel, in the a bond we prize  
Which North and South unites and unifies.  
No mountains rise as barriers between,  
Nor rivers roll, for these by man have been  
Made subject to the wondrous power he wields  
From Northern plains to Southern cotton-fields.  
Span of the present, span of future weal  
Graved on the architraves of massive steel  
Deep-butressed in the river's rolling tide,  
What fate can hold thy future vast and wide!  
Let but thy providence without surcease  
Guard o'er our city with its bow of peace.

- *Robt. W. Morrow*

*Delivered as an address on May 22, 1896 as a part of the celebration of completion of the bridge.*