

at that period there was no city here—there were a few rude buildings, and some gentlemen, attracted by the location and prospective importance of the place, interested in its future building up, and, like myself, believing it might grow into a great city. I attended, I recollect, a court here at that time, but there were hardly any inhabitants and very little to do in the court. I cannot describe the condition of this place at that time. I have been over the city to-day, and endeavored to recollect the sites where the important transactions were, even where the Court House stood ; but I am entirely unable now to form any definite opinion where the place was, and so of all the rest of the city. We have all heard of the wonderful and amazing growth of this city ; of the great, bold enterprise of its inhabitants—the whole country is deeply impressed with these sentiments, but, sir, it takes the presentation of the reality before us to enable us to understand the full power of your operations here. [Applause.] I have been amazed to-day, as I passed through your thoroughfares and viewed the wonderful progress that has been made in that short period. I believe that to-day you constitute a city, third in point of population, and first, I may say, in point of enterprise, upon this continent—[applause]—and I doubt whether you yourselves understand the full importance of the position on this continent which you occupy. I am sure, sir, until I passed through this excursion, I had really no conception of the importance of this point, Chicago, and, what is still more important, of the vastness and richness of the great country that lies west of you, and which is bound to contribute in the future, so much to build up the second, if not the first city upon this continent. [Applause.] I have always been a strenuous advocate for a railway communication between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. I have never doubted that it was a political as well as a commercial necessity, without which I do not believe that our great and glorious republic could be amplified and grow to its full dimensions. I have always been willing, as a member of the National Legislature, to do almost anything that