

## Richard Josiah Hinton to National Kansas Committee

R. J. Hinton wrote this letter from Lawrence to the members of the National Kansas Committee, offering his suggestions about how to sustain the struggling settlers of Kansas. He proposed the idea of bringing the manufacturing industry into the territory as a source of employment. He also mentioned that a flour mill would be greatly appreciated by Kansans.

Creator: Hinton, Richard J. (Richard Josiah), 1830-1901

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Hinton, R. J.  
To the Nat. Kansas Co.

Lawrence, Kansas, Oct. 10th, 1856  
Kan. Hist. Soc. 28961

Gentlemen:

Thaddeus Hyatt,

Knowing the interest, wide spread and heartfelt, which exists in the minds of the Northern people, on all that relates to Kansas, I do not deem an apology necessary, for thus troubling you with a few hints and suggestions, the results of the observations I have made and the experience I have acquired during a residence of two months in this beautiful land; this period is not a long one truly, but we live ~~years~~ in the space of days in this ever varying and shifting life.

Doubtless the State Central Committee have impressed you <sup>fully</sup> and your own knowledge of this important crisis <sup>equally</sup> have made you ~~fully~~ aware, that ~~mens~~ arms and provisions are necessary to the support and to aid the triumph of the Free State cause; therefore I will not say but little on this score. We hear of large bodies of emigrants on the Northern route, ~~we~~ know large numbers will come in after the Election, and the point that strikes us already in the Territory, seems to be, how shall these emigrants be maintained and employed. By the time these emigrants arrive, the season will be too far advanced for them to go into agricultural settlements or to take the necessary steps for founding towns. They will consequently then resort to Lawrence, Topeka and other old established places. Of course the Committees who organize these companies, will provide for their winter sustenance. Yet some kind of



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mechanical and manufacturing employment, might by the aid of <sup>even a small</sup> ~~some~~ portion of the capital so willingly lavished in the cause of Freedom in Kansas, be set in motion, and be productive of not only the immediate good, of affording employment <sup>ment</sup> to <sup>those</sup> already here and to those who are coming, but lay broad the foundations of future material wealth to Kansas and through her to the whole North. The bestowing of provisions and clothing on those <sup>that</sup> are in want, will be a very beneficent and useful work, but it will be <sup>much</sup> more real benefit, if while doing so, you also aid in enabling them to earn these things for themselves. They are too many in every community, who will not work, while they can be sustained without it.

It is I know, very difficult, in so young a country and amid the <sup>peculiar</sup> difficulties that surround us, to start any paying manufacturing business, and yet we could with a little rightly directed capital, be enabled to supply our own population with much that we are dependent upon our ill-feeling neighbor, Missouri, to supply us with. We want here ~~and~~ at Topeka, Steam Power, to give motion to various kinds of business. We want erected a large Engine with the necessary <sup>gear</sup>, capable of putting in operation, planing machine and also a lathe and machinery for the manufacture of sashes, doors and other articles required for building. Now, though, such a ~~machines~~ could hardly be got in operation before spring, the erections of the buildings and all the ~~necessary~~ preparation would afford employment



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for many hands during the winter. ~~and~~  
The advantages <sup>accruing</sup> to ~~the~~ Kansas and to <sup>the</sup> Cause of Free Labor, would be immense. By the creation of such machinery, ~~then~~ of the residents, who from the loss of property, and the continued strain upon their small resources, are fast becoming discouraged and <sup>are</sup> taking steps to leave, will be encouraged, and Kansas will retain hundreds who will otherwise leave and those who come will be encouraged to stay. The establishment of Steam Power, would open the way to the Manufacture of Sashes, Doors, Furniture, Wooden Ware, &c, articles all of them necessary in a new country and for the supply of which, at exorbitant prices, we are dependent upon our enemies. One of the most essential and useful machines that can be sent here, is one of the numerous planing machines, that can be purchased and transported here at a comparatively small cost. If something of the kind is not soon supplied, we shall be in danger of losing the <sup>valuable</sup> labor of our carpenters. The hard woods, mostly walnut and oak, used here for building, render planing by hand so laborious and exhausting, that our carpenters will not do it. A planing machine is of essential value to us, therefore. If steps could be taken for the establishment of the above, much of <sup>the</sup> winter, if not mild one, could be used in preparing for operations in the spring. Stone can be quarried easily and at little cost immediately around the places I have named and the ~~wood~~ <sup>constant</sup> work could be made, fitted &c, all the winter, so that employment might be given to many and inducements be held out for future



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operations that would keep a great number in Kansas.

If also, Capitalists could be induced to start the Boot & Shoe manufacturing, it would be of great present <sup>advantage</sup> and much future prosperity. The plains of Kansas are admirably adapted for stock raising and therefore the materials for this business would be obtained at home. There is enough of the New England element here to drive such things right along. I think if some one would bring half a dozen sewing machines and manufacture clothing, bags &c it would be found to pay. ~~however~~ The great want here, ~~is~~ to be employment. It is a good thing to send men here, but it will be equally as good, to keep them busy after getting them. Dr. Watts lines still hold good - "For Satan find some work,

For idle hands to do."

Another thing merchanted here, is a good flouring Mill. This is a grand wheat growing country and a good deal in spite of the troubles has been raised in this vicinity and very large quantities been raised this fall. If we have the means of turning it into flour, we shall be enabled to supply the <sup>people</sup> ~~ground~~ cheaper than it can be purchased and keep the money in our hands.

One thing more and I have done. During the last war, a great deal of damage has been done by the system of pressing horses, &c. after it was over, men left, fearful of not being able to retain the property so acquired. They took with them their rifles, which are a great loss to Kansas. All companies who come in under present excitement, should not be allowed to retain their rifles until they have lived here six months.

The Rifles should be held in charge by the Company Directors, who should be responsible for them during that period. They should be kept for the use of Kansas for that time at least and no one should be allowed to take them out of the country. With all due respect I remain  
Yours Truly, R. J. Hinton.

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