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OREGON PIONEER HISTORY.

SKETCHES OF EARLY DAYS.—MEN AND TIMES IN THE FORTIES.

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Much interest will always attach to the first effort of white women to cross the continent, a journey that many men could have hesitated to undertake at that early day, and that only brave women, actuated by the highest motives, could have attempted.

The first women to attempt this remarkable journey were the wives of the three missionaries, Spalding, Whitman and Gray. All were well educated. Mrs. Whitman was naturally very firm in character and fine looking in appearance, as also was Mrs. Gray. Mrs. Spalding was very quick in learning a language. She rapidly learned the Nez Perces tongue and acquired a strong influence over the Indians.

In 1835, in company with Rev. Samuel Parker, Dr. Marcus Whitman started for Oregon. But the two men were so radically different by nature that they mutually agreed, at the great Rocky Mountain rendezvous on Green river, that Mr. Parker should go on and establish the Nez Perces mission and Whitman return, report to the mission board and come again to the rendezvous the following year with associates to carry out their plans. It so happened that at the Green river rendezvous Parker and Whitman met a band of Nez Perces Indians under the lead of the well-known Indian chief Lawyer. These Indians, hearing of their arrival, made earnest request to have these missionaries locate in their country, to which they acceded. Mr. Parker was to go under their care to the Columbia river and they promised to be at Green river the following year (1836) to take charge of Dr. Whitman and his associates. Mr. H. Spalding and Dr. M. Whitman and their wives, and W. H. Gray, secular agent, and his wife, formed the mission party that arrived at the Rocky Mountain rendezvous in the summer of 1836. They had met no stirring incident or adventure up to that time, and were surprised at what they found there, or rather a little before they arrived, as well as after arrival.

Two days before reaching Green river they were alarmed by the appearance of a party of nearly twenty Indians and whites who could not be told from savages by their looks. Yells were uttered and bullets went whizzing over their heads as the mad crowd came rushing toward them. But an experienced plains man had discerned a white flag that meant peace. So they manifested no alarm. Horses and riders seemed crazy with excitement as they came hooting and yelling, running and jumping over sage brush or whatever interfered. This was the wild etiquette of the plains, and the party reciprocated it as well as they could with cheers and gun shots. The newcomers passed to the rear, and surrounding them, rushed back to their camp as madly as they came. That night they found a company of Nez Perces with a letter from Mr. Parker, announcing his safe arrival and good feeling existing among the Indians.

We will stop a moment at that mountain camp, because its altitude was remarkable and its surrounding were worthy of mention. From that great mountain plateau the waters of the continent diverged in all directions. Some coursed north and east to feed the Saskatchewan; others flowed towards the Missouri; to the south and east went streams to feed the lower Missouri and Colorado, while springs that flowed northwest gave birth to Snake river, the greatest source of the summer floods of the Columbia. It was truly a significant spot whereon to hold a council as a be-

ginning of a new life on the other side of our great continent!

It was close under the summit-land of the continent that our travelers offered hospitality that evening to the friendly Nez Perces who came half a thousand miles, at least, to welcome them and escort them to their far western homes. They spread the modest feast upon the mountain sward, with snow-capped summits at hand for a July token. Battered iron plates and wooden handled knives, and forked sticks (if one preferred not to use the fingers) and well worn tin cups set off the cuisine. The venison roast was toothsome, and so was the broiled buffalo steak toasted over the coals on a forked stick. Such was the bill of fare, seasoned for once with tea and sugar and spiced with a little salt—and sand and dirt ad libitum. It was effective, despite the lack of dessert and the scantiness of courses, for twenty-seven years after the great chief, Lawyer, asserted that then and there his heart became one with Americans. No doubt the famous Indian became interested then in the two American wives who were to live among his people and be their instructors in a better life. The influence of women was greatly felt in the history of those missions.

At the Great American rendezvous on Green river the missionary party found a city of at least 1,500 population, made up of various races. The fur company had buildings and equipages for trains as well as trading station. A sort of order was observed in building this strange and transient city of the plains, so as to permit passage to and through it. Ingress and egress was a matter of doubt, however, though a space beside the river answered for a general highway. Different quarters were allotted to various interests. All the whites congregated around the company's quarters. Hunters and trappers of various degrees made up this department. The different Indian tribes had each their allotment of ground, that stretched for three miles along Horse creek and Green river, where Snakes, Bannocks and southern tribes were camped. The far northern hordes spread six miles up Green river, where Flatheads and Blackfeet had erected their lodges and various camps. Each band or tribe was so disposed as to be able to defend its own premises and protect its stock, for they had great wealth of horses and brought them to the rendezvous for trade. It so happened that all the savage Inland Empire was at peace in 1836, but the Indian's motto is: "In time of peace prepare for war," and all the camps manifested the eternal vigilance that makes peace among Indians possible. The city at Bridger's was a military camp, or rather a succession of camps. Stealing was a constant crime, and the only law was that of might. The horse thief was shot down where found. The quickest shot decided questions of law and fact at times. There was say one hundred Americans who were hunters and trappers; about fifty French; a few traders; twenty outsiders, and the remainder were natives of the plains.

By arrangement the Indians got up a grand display to interest their white visitors, and especially to honor the first appearance of civilized women on the sage plains. The procession began to form at the Snake and Bannack encampment. These were joined by Nez Perces and Flat Heads, and every warrior was dressed and painted in the gaudiest style of Indian haberdashery. There was not so much of actual clothing as of personal adornment. The warriors had only a single cloth about their loins, painted their bodies elaborately. Head dresses of feathers set off the cavaliers, and their weapons of war were carried with pride and ostentation. They had many rude instruments of music that contributed sounds in astounding variety. There were probably six hundred warriors in this grand cal-

valcade, and the ladies as well as some of the husbands, were relieved in mind when they were told the demonstration had no hostile intent, but was a personal compliment. It cannot be said that under the most agreeable conditions they found the sound of the war-hoop, the savage yell and the Indian drum soothing to the nerves or quieting to civilized senses. Mr. Gray alludes to the potent influence the presence of refined womanhood exercised over the lately rude mountain-men, even there on the summit of the Rocky Mountains. "The rough, veteran mountain hunter would touch his hat in a manner absolutely ridiculous," it was so foreign to his every-day life and conversation.

At Green river they met Captain Nathaniel Wyeth, who was returning from the Columbia river, on his way back to the States. With him were John McLeod and Thomas McKay. Wyeth gave them excellent advice to govern their conduct when they reached Oregon. They also met Jo Meek, who entertained them with yarns that to say the least were elastic. In all there were eight of these mountain-men, hunters and trappers, who earned a reputation as free lances in days preceding even our "pioneer days." The Independent trappers were a class of men the Hudson Bay company did not tolerate any farther than they could possibly help, they were too independent and as they usually were married to Indian women their influence over the natives was very oft a source of trouble and difficulty.

Dr. Whitman had persisted in bringing his wagon through the Rocky Mountains, and it rolled on when they started west from that great rendezvous after six days rest. That wagon was a source of infinite labor to its heroic owner, but he stayed with it in many difficult places, and with the aid of the ever-willing Nez Perces, it was safely brought through the rough mountains this side of Green river, and overcoming every difficulty was safely taken to Old Fort Boise. This one incident illustrates the unyielding and positive character of Marcus Whitman. It remained at Fort Boise until Dr. Whitman could send for it, which I think was two years later, and was left there because of the general complaint that it delayed the progress of the company. Mr. Gray says the Hudson Bay company found it useful in connection with hauling that had to be done while it remained there.

The three ladies were ferried over Snake river on a raft made of bullrushes. Their clothing was a little wet as they had to lie down on the raft, but they scarce minded this inconvenience. Some time was spent to dry and repack, and then they pushed on toward Oregon.

At last these heroic women stood on the western and northern slope of the Blue Mountains that overlooked the broad valley of the Columbia. These mountains break down suddenly on that side, as all the height gained in a long day of travel is overcome by a single bold and almost precipitous declivity. On the brow of this great outlook they stood and took in the wonderful vistas that was spread in wild profusion as far as the sight could go. Yonder canyon is threaded by the River of the West, and its silver flow is visible in places. The rolling uplands of the Umatilla valley lie below them and glisten with the waving of the bunch grass on a thousand hills. Now there are wheat fields all over that fertile scope and the red-men of 1836, what few are left, are gathered on a reservation, while civilized communities have made their homes over all the broad domain east of Umatilla river. Standing where they stood, to-day we see Pendleton, Centerville, Weston, Milton and Walla Walla, and along the desolate shore, rock ribbed to-day as then, the iron horse courses on schedule time, while on the broad river great steamers go to and fro.

The scene is beautiful—more so by

far to-day than half a century gone—and yet there is a blur upon it that all the charms of refinement and culture cannot efface, for we seem to see where Waii-lat-pu was—the scene of massacre that was enacted in 1847; we seem to hear the war-hoop and savage yells that rose when our missionaries became martyrs to a great cause. They died at the post of danger rather than to seek safety by abandoning it.

Only a month before that fatal day, returning from Oregon City, Whitman camped near the Umatilla, close by an emigrant train in which was Judge J. W. Grim, a well known and honored citizen of Marion county, who has given me a sketch of the doctor's speech at their camp fire. He gave them much valuable information and good advice, and in allusion to himself he said he said he felt insecure where he was, as as there was a hostile feeling growing among the natives that might end in fatal results. Knowing this and patiently doing all he could to avert it, there was something more than mere heroism in the sense of duty that held him there a waiting victim. One of those heroic women lived to fulfill her life work, but the other was sacrificed with others on that fearful day of massacre.

ANTS AND THEIR ENEMIES.

The Relations of the Farmer Thereto.—How they Originate and How to Depose Them.

BY F. S. MATTESON.

The ants, like the bees, are communistic, living together in families, or tribes, and carrying on their domestic and political affairs with patriarchal simplicity. Their communities are composed, like the domestic bee, of males, females and neuters, or workers. Their females, however, do not appear to be so exactly jealous as the female bee, who suffers no rival to remain in the same cantonment; but many males and females live amicably together in the same community with a multitude of workers.

Whether the ants practice polygamy, like the Mormons, or polyandry, like the bees, I am not informed; neither does it matter. It is with their habits of living and methods of doing business which chiefly concerns us. In this we find much to commend. From the birth of history, the ant, together with the bee, has been extolled as a pattern to be copied after "Go to the ant thou sluggard. Consider her ways and be wise," is as applicable now as it was when the servants of Hiram were hewing the cedars of Lebanon into timber for the great temple at Jerusalem. "Which having no guide, overseer or ruler, provideth her meat in summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest."

Ants make their nests in the ground, in rotten wood, and sometimes in other places. Some varieties raise a mound (ant hill), others simply burrow. Those nesting in wood, bite off, and carry out small bits, and thus form their rooms. They live an active, industrious and energetic life during summer, and in winter lie dormant. They breed in their nests during summer, and carefully tend their young offspring. When the nest is invaded, every worker engages either in the defense of the home or in carrying the young ones to a place of safety.

Ants are indomitable, both as workers and fighters. When one has more than he can manage alone, others come to assist until the united force is sufficient to accomplish the work in hand. Feeding principally upon the bodies of dead insects, worms and animal fats and juices generally, they attack and kill such as they are able to overcome, for purposes of food. Attacking in united force and great fury, insects one hundred times their size and strength, they stay with him like "original sin" until he succumbs. And woe to the insect or small animal that interferes with their business. The ants attack him with

such vigor and persistence, that he dies or finds safety in flight.

Do ants kill aphids? This question has lately been in the FARMER, pro and ante. I think they do, but never saw them do it. That is, some varieties, and under certain conditions do. Ants are canivorous, or nearly so. Why then not eat aphids. But ants are very fond of sweets, and the aphid ejects a sweet excretion much relished by them. It follows therefore that as Mr. Ant is a shrewd business manager, he does not care to injure his herd of docile honeycombs; especially if he has plenty of other food. If pressed by hunger, I have little doubt but he would eat the aphid. Possibly he has government regulations on the matter, and may not eat aphids unless so ordered. However this may be, ant communities live and work together in the best of harmony, and they seem to understand each other, and never quarrel among themselves. Their labor organizations seem to be perfect, and they never indulge in "strikes" or "boycotts."

Yet the ant is ill-tempered, quarrelsome and formidable as a fighter, and comes nearer to mankind in the matter of regular wars, than any insect that I know of. But when this diminutive Spartan goes on the warpath, he never sneaks out at night with a gunny-bag over his head to attack the helpless and defenceless, but goes in daylight, openly, and above board, strong in confidence of his own prowess, with blood in his eye and battle in his heart. When his enemy of invasion marches forth to conquest, Valor goes before, Victory is borne upon his standard, and Death and Destruction follow in his train.

In common parlance he is called "Ant," and his habitation is called an "ant-nest;" names in every way befitting so industrious and enterprising a home builder. But science has loaded him with a polysyllabic nomenclature of the most jaw-breaking kind. How can an insect only one-sixteenth part of an inch long be expected to preserve his equality under the cognomen of "mono-mo-ri-am-car-ban-a-ri-um!" Who would quietly endure to be stigmatized as a "Cre-ma-to-gas-ter-lin-e-o-la-ta!" when he was only one-eighth of an inch long. And to call a creature only one-fourth of an inch in length a "Myr-meco-log-i-ques," a "Do-ra-myr-mex-in-a-mus," or a "Po-go-no-myr-o-nex-bar-ba-ta!" might well render him furious. Yet the ants whole family is called names that would be as sweet incense to the vanity of a Spanish hidalgo, as "Form-icid-ae, Do-li-cho-de-rid-ae," etc., and even his humble nest is termed a "Form-icary." But the ant is only a—mire, and not a Spanish grandee.

I like the ant for various reasons. He attends to his own affairs. He destroys many noxious insects. His industry and perseverance is commendable, and one can but admire his grit even if often compelled to condemn his judgment. I like him also for the same reason that Josh Billings liked the rooster, not only because he crowed, but because he had "the spurs to back that kro up."

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