

his feet, but could not. I rode close to him and set the end of his lignum vitae cane that I had in my hand hard into the ground for him to pull up by. I then urged him to walk a little. He tottered along a few yards and gave out. I then saw a little sunken spot a few steps from me and led his horse down into it and with much difficulty got him once more raised on his horse. I then requested him to hold fast by the saddle and horse's mane and I would lead by the bridle." In this manner they traveled all alone in the rain until nightfall, being behind a company of three wagons which they were not able to overtake. At night Mrs. Brown took a wagon cover which was under her saddle, and throwing it over the projecting limb of a tree, encamped under it upon the naked earth, Capt. Brown being in a half unconscious condition. There, without food, she waited for morning, when the Captain being some better, she was able to get him again upon his horse.

Many such days and nights were passed by Mrs. Brown. Her daughter says: "I remember one cold, stormy night when there was a rolling piece of ground and only one tree for shelter. We made a good fire near the tree, eat the little supper we had, and it was very little, when mother wrapped her cloak close round her and leaned her back against that old tree. There she sat through the whole night. We could not persuade her to go down to the wagon or be carried there. She 'was tired,' she said, 'and wanted to rest in her own way.' It was pretty hard to ride a poor horse on a pack-saddle through the swales in midwinter as she did."

Not to dwell too long on this part of her experience, Mrs. Brown arrived at the settlements in the Willamette valley in December and on Christmas Day was received into the house of a Methodist minister, who gave her and Capt. Brown shelter and food through the remainder of the winter for her services as housekeeper. Think of it! A woman sixty-six years old, after passing through such an experience, working for her board and that of her helpless old brother-in-law. But this was not all.

"For two or three weeks of my journey down the Willamette I had felt something in my glove-finger which I

supposed to be a button. On examination at my new home in Salem, I found it to be a 6¼-cent piece. This was the whole of my cash capital with which to commence business in Oregon. With this I purchased three needles, traded off my old clothes to the squaws for bukskins and worked them into gloves for the Oregon ladies and gentlemen, which cleared me upwards of \$30 extra of boarding."

In the following October, Mrs. Brown, having passed the summer with Mrs. W. H. Gray, of Clatsop, returned to the Willamette valley and, going to the Tualatin Plains to visit her son, became acquainted with Rev. Harvey Clark and wife, living on a land claim where Forest Grove now stands. They desired her to visit them a few days; winter set in, and they urged her to remain. She accepted the invitation and became as a mother to these most estimable people. It is better to let her tell what took place thereafter:

"In October, 1847, news from the suffering immigrants reached us. Much sickness and many deaths on the plains, and many poor orphan children left to an unfeeling world, to be cared for by strangers. I said to Mr. Clark: 'Why has Providence frowned on me and left me poor in this world? Had he blessed me with riches as he has many others, I know right well what I would do!' 'What would you do?' was the question. 'I would establish myself in a comfortable home and receive all poor children and be a mother to them.' He fixed a keen eye on me and asked if I was in earnest in what I said. 'Yes, I am.' He said, 'I will try with you and see what effort we can make.'"

From this remark of Mrs. Brown's grew the Pacific University of Oregon. Mr. Clark agreed with her to get assistance and to establish a school. There was a log meeting house at Forest Grove, and Mrs. Brown was put in possession of this building, where she was to receive any children, rich or poor, who wished to come. Those parents who were able were to pay \$5 per week for board, washing and tuition. Mrs. Brown agreed to labor for one year without compensation. Mr. Clark and others agreed to assist as far as they were able with provisions should there not be enough coming in to support the poor in the school. In April, 1848, to use Mrs. Brown's own

expression, "All things being prepared for me to go into the old meeting house and cluck up my chickens the next Monday morning," she took possession and began her work. The neighbors contributed what dishes (mostly tin) and broken knives and forks they could spare—for earthen dishes were luxuries in that day in Oregon—to set her up at housekeeping. Mrs. Clark\* taught the school, which increased rapidly. In the summer a house was put up for the boarders, thirty in number, of both sexes and all ages, from five to twenty-one, and Mrs. Brown performed the whole labor of this family, except the washing, which the pupils did. She was a small woman and lame and sixty-seven years old!

Trustees were now called for and appointed—eight in number. They voted Mrs. Brown the use of the boarding house free of rent, requiring her to provide for herself, establishing the price of board at \$2 per week. Whatever was over expenses was to go to compensate her for her labor. But as the years 1848-9 were periods when Oregon was almost deserted by men, who were all off to the California mines, many children who came to her were almost the same as orphans, not knowing whether they had fathers alive or not. None were, however, turned away for their poverty. "In 1851," she says, "I had forty in my family, at \$2.50 per week; mixed with my own hands 3,423 pounds of flour in less than five months."

Her daughter, in a letter that is before me, writes: "I shall never forget how, once when I was on a visit, the little ones looked when climbing at evening into her lap and hanging about her shoulders, some of them almost babes. Then she would parade them out in a row and give them the tune, and how sweet their voices sounded to my ear! The long table was always spread with plenty of good, wholesome food. In the morning I counted forty little undergarments hanging on the line to air. What a task, I thought, for one of my mother's age to undertake; but knowing what material she was of, I was very willing to see her revel in it as she did. On Sunday morning they all followed her to church, two by two,

\*I understand from Mrs. Brown's account that Mrs. Clark was the teacher at this time. I know that as early as 1844 Mr. and Mrs. Clark taught a school in Tualatin Plains.