

Dr. John McLoughlin —HIS HISTORY—HIS PLACE IN OUR FAIR TEMPLE OF FAME

(By W. G. D. Mercer, Sergeant-at-arms State Senate)

"Nor want we skill or art, from whence to raise Magnificence; and what can heaven show more?"

—Milton.

Today I sat for a long, long time looking at the splendid painting of Dr. John McLoughlin which hangs above the president's desk in the senate chamber of the capitol of Oregon. And as I sat in deep thought and looked at the remarkable picture of that overshadowing character—that mysterious admixture of melancholy and merriment, of laughter and tragedy, of mirth and tears—I fancied that his gaze is one of friendliness and confidence—that his eyes are turned from the place of his landing upon our shores and are reading aright the lessons of recorded wisdom—that his back is turned toward his former countrymen and from the Hudson Bay Company and from his present commanding position his look is on and over our wide extended and prosperous commonwealth, an outlook which is both a promise and a prophecy. We can not know all that was in the mind and heart, in purpose and in hope, as this wise and beneficent man first put on that far-away look.

"A spirit fit to start an empire, And look the world to law."

But we do know that even this astute man, with all his forethought, could only have regarded as a wild imagining, an empty dream, the pro-

duct of an unrestrained fancy if the story of Oregon could have been told him—a story of magnificent development, vast wealth, untold resources, a teeming population happy



Home of Dr. John McLoughlin, Oregon City.

in industries not then conceived of, and that the smiling eddies of the dimpled Willamette—with its miles of shipping far above its outlet—flows by homes that in verdant lawn and flowering terrace, in modern elegance and comfort, or in baronial magnificence of structure, may well challenge comparison with the noblest examples of English or continental suburban life. And then on and on as the clear beautiful current of the rippling McKenzie or the Indian-named Mohawk comes to view in all the sweep of rich valleys or rugged mountains, and the spreading forests that are ever whispering—as if God was consenting to hear—that the ancient earth is indeed our mother and that we have found her again after being lost among houses, customs, and restraints in other lands that are now fuller of pomp and emptier of prosperity—whispering the call, the awakening of an untamed wilderness with the necessity of peril and calm acceptance of it. If all this could have been told him—this man of tempest and sunshine in the painting—we might have

regarded it as the wild Utopian dream of one intoxicated with visions of more than oriental magnificence. And as I sit and meditate upon the life's work of the Father of Oregon—this man of romance and pathos, of fun and logic, all wedged together—I fancy that—like Elijah of old—he is listening to "a still, small voice" which tells that the deeds of time are governed, as well as judged, by the decrees of eternity. And this thought reminds me that the soil of Oregon has time and again been made sacred by the blood of pioneer patriots. I also remember the simple dignity of

threads are blown toward me and are spun by the wheel of my fancy into many-colored yarns and then woven into the fabric by the shuttle of my pen. Into the warp and woof of this fabric I have doubtless woven much that even the most astute of my readers can not suspect, far less discern. But I must not pause to analyze. I can not stop to reason. I merely feel—feel that the looms of time are never idle, and the busy fingers of the fates are ever weaving, as in a beautiful tapestry, the many threads and colors that make up our several lives, and when these are exposed to the critics and to admirers there shall be found none of brighter colors or of nobler pattern than the life of the Father of Oregon. Aye, when the nineteenth century shall assemble its illustrious dead in their final Pantheon there will be found within its mystic walls Dr. John McLoughlin—one of the grand personalities in modern history. In saying this I am not disposed to disparage the great men of any other land, to despise the home of any people less favored than we. Let the Italian sing of his glorious skies and balmy air, the English of his widespread domain, the German of his Rhine with its vine-clad banks, the Swiss of his mighty Alps—we rejoice in a land where there is no petty kaiser, no grinding oppression, no clamorous and wretched retinue of Italian beggars or arrogant and diseased aristocracy—in a land where every forest is a fairyland, every field a picture, every landscape a poem, and every flower a tender thought—in a land where:

"The Sky is as a temple's arch,
The blue and wavy air
Is glorious with the spirit-march
Of messengers at prayer."
We joy in a land where the natural scenery is so beautifully—where grandeur meets with the awful, where the wild mingles with the wild, where the warlike monotone of the cataract's thunderous fall is the mighty symphony of great depths, great heights, great reaches, where the summits of rocky walls are kissed by freighted clouds waiting at anchor for the wind. Then like great ships heaving anchor to a single command they sail down off the heights and the great forest becomes the center of the most sublime scene where rude hall in eddying, rattling tempest forms. And as we walk the dim aisles of the column-like trunks of the stately Oregon fir and white pine we will hear the tinkling footfalls of swift messengers who will whisper that unseen hands are about to draw back the bolts from the gates of futurity. And while waiting—half-expectant—we will have strangely beautiful thoughts of far away lands and dreadful storms to which these magnificent products will come as proudly erect and grandly beautiful they carry the sails of a commerce the world wide over. No wonder the hearts thrill with reverential awe! It is there—amid such surroundings—we find religion—harmony, law, variety, freedom; living, growing, ever-changing, through the season ages; yielding to each season the things that belong to that season; lying dormant sometimes, it may be, but always there. There we find God.

And now as we of today catch in its first light the principles of realized dreams, the golden domes of high possibilities, the purpling hills of great delights, our hearts are thrilled and tendered by the recollection that the priceless heritage of good deeds is mightier for a nation's defense than vast armies and munitions of war. It builds empires and changes the foes of freedom. God bestows on nations no greater gift than great and good men. And so you and I, my gentle reader, proud of yesterday, contented with today, hopeful for tomorrow—with tears for the dead, with cheers for the living—have paused for a brief time today for the purpose of weaving a chaplet of fragrant flowers and strewing the beauties of nature about the memory of Dr. John McLoughlin. If it is a blessing that any poor man of Oregon, with ordinary health in his family, and the ordinary blessing of God upon his industry, may give to son, without sending him away from home, the best education the country affords—if there is any blessing in having a home at one of the fountains of life for this vast confederacy of states—then that best privilege may be traced to the influence of Dr. John McLoughlin, to the peculiar character which he, more than any other man, gave to the common wealth of Oregon in its very beginning.

Every one of us is daily enjoying the effects of his widely known and wide spread benefactions to perishing emigrants, of his wisdom, and of his public spirit. Thus he is today our benefactor; and thus he is to be the benefactor of our posterity through ages to come. Today a grateful people look on this painting and love to think that his dying gaze read a mystic meaning which only the rapt and parting soul may know—we love to believe that in the silence of the receding world he heard the great waves breaking on a farther shore, and felt already upon his venerable brow the breath of the eternal morning—we love to believe that:

bare plain pioneer graves fitting the brevity of life, the littleness man. Yea, the caprice of fleeting existence must needs thus bend to the immovable Omnipotence, which plants its foot on all the centuries and has neither change of purpose nor repose. And yet these myriads of nameless pioneer martyrs did not die in vain. They were fortunate even in their death, for an event so tragical calls the world imperatively to a careful study of their lives and characters and posterity. Yea, in all that speaks of this anticipate the sure praise of loyal devotion, heroic endeavor, and valiant contest Oregon shines undimmed in the luster of her untarnished glory amid the galaxy of the states, staunch and loyal.

And now the gray Sabbath day—unwarned by any sunset glow—has darkened into night while I have been linking fancy to fancy—dreaming dreams I never thought to dream before—about this strangely interesting cross and pile of silken threads so curiously interlaced to form the pattern of the man in the painting before me. One by one these silken

the good begun by thee shall onward flow
In many a branching stream, and wider grow,
The seed that in these few and fleeting hours,
Thy hands, unsparring and unweary'd sow,
Shall deck thy grave with aramantine flowers,
And yield thee fruit divine in heaven's immortal bowers."

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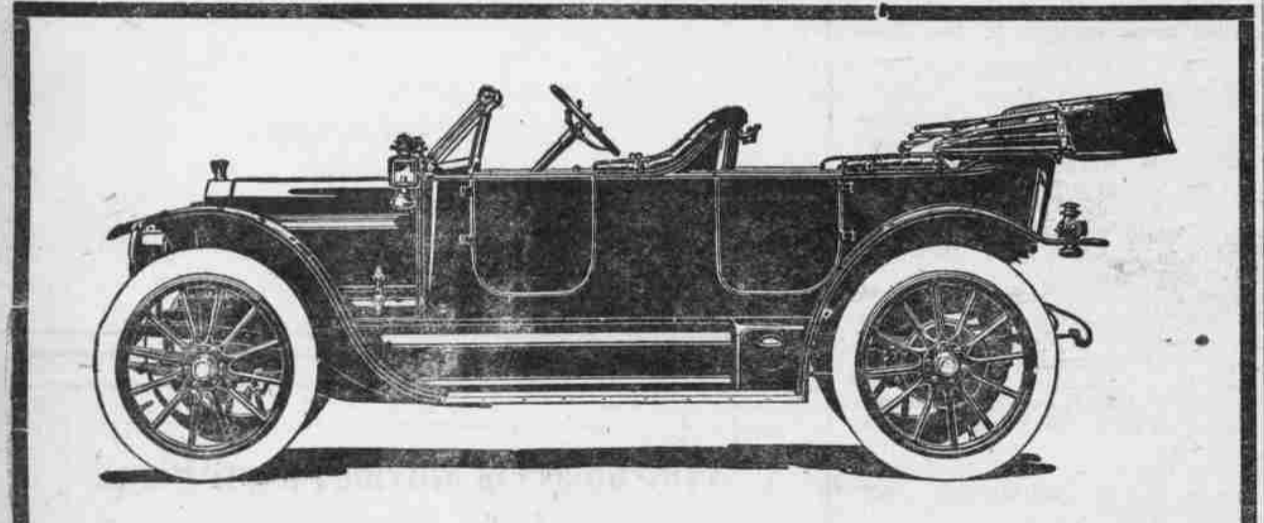
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3	246,175	37	24,450
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7	279,215	39	235,475
8	800,055	40	99,500
9	170,205	41	57,500
10	82,520	42	58,000
11	70,085	44	67,000
14	267,290	45	224,475
15	104,500	47	5,500
16	847,195	49	14,750
17	69,940	50	19,500
18	734,225	51	71,750
19	568,765	55	256,620
20	152,975	56	614,370
21	639,995	59	52,255
22	223,365	60	51,000
23	625,640	65	90,280
25	566,515	66	256,060
26	77,890	67	14,500
28	625,035	68	11,500
29	81,075	71	82,350
31	35,880	72	71,250
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In many a branching stream, and wider grow,
The seed that in these few and fleeting hours,
Thy hands, unsparring and unweary'd sow,
Shall deck thy grave with aramantine flowers,
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