

# The Oregon Statesman

"No Favor Sways Us; No Fear Shall Awe"  
From First Statesman, March 23, 1851

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## The Catholic Centennial

The first settlers in the Oregon Country were nearly all Catholic; French Canadians who came with Lewis and Clark in 1805 (two of them) or with the Astors in 1811-12 (12 to 14 of them), or later with the "Nor'westers" or the Hudson's Bay company, most of them taking for wives native women and being encouraged to cultivate the soil and make homes, thus abandoning their previous lives as trappers and hunters.

Came the Methodist missionaries under Jason Lee in 1834, and the American Board missionaries with Dr. Whitman and Rev. Spalding in 1836. The arrival and ministrations of these devout religious leaders caused the minds of the then predominant Catholic people among our first tillers of the soil and tenders of domestic animals to revert back in their minds to the memories of their youth and to long for the ways of approach to divine favor with which they were familiar. So they asked for priests, and had faith that their petitions would be granted. To make these petitions seem more urgent, and perhaps more deserving, the Catholic settlers of the Willamette valley in 1836 joined their labors in erecting a log building which was to serve as a Catholic church; the first church of that denomination in all of North America facing the Pacific north of the Mexican (California) line. The structure was raised on a spot near the site of the present St. Paul, Marion county, Oregon; near the first cemetery in that section, that God's acre on a piece of ground which faces the present paved highway on the right hand as the traveler going north leaves the limits of that city. Likely, the exact spot on which was that first Catholic church will be found to have been a few rods west of south from that ancient cemetery, when the belated search for the exact spot shall have been rewarded with success—a search that would have been simple during the lives of a score and more of people who were in the flesh not many short years ago.

Finally, the Hudson's Bay company in London having been petitioned for the passage of two priests in their west bound express and the plea granted, Rev. Francis Norbert Blanchet and Rev. Modeste Demers in May, 1838, joined that historic brigade at Montreal. Father Blanchet had been assigned to the Oregon mission as vicar-general. Father Demers his assistant. Their way westward was a triumphal journey; at Fort Colville in a stay of four days 19 persons were baptized; at Fort Okanogan they met with similar success, and the same at Fort Walla Walla—and so on across a vast stretch of country, their arrival at Fort Vancouver being in the nature of a triumphal entry. The beginnings of the work of those missionaries were made here a hundred years ago, so the Catholic church of the Pacific Northwest has been appropriately celebrating its centennial with great demonstrations. At Vancouver on Wednesday scenes of a hundred years ago were reenacted. At St. Paul, Oregon, where was the mother church of all this vast region, and where, in the new cemetery, is the grave of Father Blanchet, the great pioneer leader, on Thursday the final and appropriately most impressive rites of all were celebrated.

It is highly proper that the Catholic centennial of that church in this great field should have had such observations; so impressive as to ring down the ages.

The great and now reunited Methodist church might with credit take a lesson from this centennial, and in doing so firmly resolve to make more of their history and thus render proper tribute to Salem and its environs, where Protestant Christianity and American civilization on the coast had their beginnings; not in a spirit of jealousy but in a spirit of emulation, following a creditable example. That church did something in this field with its 1934 centennial celebration; but the Catholics have outdone them with theirs, of 1939.

Salem, highest spot of history in all the region of North America draining into the Pacific, will have its centennial next year. This city was started in 1840 by the Methodist mission under Jason Lee; the first residence for whites his mission headquarters and home, still standing on the spot where it was erected, at present 960 Broadway.

Editor's Note: The Statesman today asked R. J. Hendricks, editor-emeritus, to draw upon his large fund of historical learning for editorial comment on the Catholic centennial this week being celebrated. The above editorial is his valuable response.

## Visit Hospitals Today

Salem is coming more and more to be a medical center, and this fact is reflected in the growth of the local hospitals and the improvement of their facilities. Little more than a decade ago, Salem was rather poorly equipped in this matter. Now there are two standardized hospitals, equipped for nearly all types of cases.

Patronage of these institutions has increased along with their facilities; the Salem Deaconess hospital, for instance, averaged less than 1000 patients prior to 1933; last year it was crowding the 3000 mark.

However, patronage is not necessarily an evidence of financial prosperity in connection with hospitals. Counting overhead and investment, the charges of most hospitals would not cover all costs—even if all bills were collected, and hospitals, like physicians, lose tremendous amounts through unpaid bills and the handling of charity cases.

Hospitals in general have not fared especially well during the depression. Many have been forced to close their doors. It is important therefore that the people of Salem recognize the public service which hospitals perform and to lend them the support that is essential. Toward a better appreciation of this fact, National Hospital day has become an annual event. Both Salem hospitals are holding open house today from 2 to 5 p. m., the Deaconess setting also the period from 7 to 8:30 tonight for inspection by the public. Salem citizens will find it instructive as well as interesting to visit the hospitals today.

## Good Cheer for Medium Minds

The suggestion that civilized man is committing "mental suicide" by over-developing his brain was made at a recent meeting of the American Psychiatric association. The longest-civilized races, notably the Jewish, have the highest incidence of neurotic disease while the negroes have the lowest.

The jittering craze—yes, and goldfish swallowing among the collegians—may be evidences that the human mentality is "slipping," according to Dr. Paul Schilder of New York.

What is true of society as a whole is also true of the individual. Both nervous breakdown, which is functional, and insanity, largely a matter of diseased brain tissue, occur more frequently among the keener-minded members within the group.

So if Johnny comes home with too many C marks, only a few Bs and no As on his report card, the hint that he is not the brilliant leader of his class need be no cause for despondency in the family circle. The plodding minds, it seems, are more durable.

## Bits for Breakfast

By R. J. HENDRICKS

A cripple wants to help a cripple: Forty Plus movement getting results; worthy.

Come to this desk a letter, dated on Tuesday. It will appear in full below, with names changed:

"I'm writing this letter in asking you to do a favor for a friend of mine. You most likely will remember me. I'm a cripple in a wheel chair. I haven't walked for about 16 years. I met you one day when I was living (at a place not far from Salem.) You came to see my father a few times. My friend's name is Mr. Smith. (That is a substitute name.)

"You see I have known Mr. Smith for over 18 years. He's a cripple; has one leg off to his hips. He wears a wooden leg, and, the other foot, all the toes are off.

"So you see he has to have a job in which he can sit down most of the time. He drives his own car.

"Mr. Smith has a good education; he went clear through high school and took a year and a half of bookkeeping at college. He's an extra good type writer and can write shorthand some.

"He has had experience in keeping a single books, and he worked about a year on W.P.A. as time clerk, but got laid off on account of the fact that he was single. But his work was perfect.

"He also worked as junior clerk for awhile, but had to give it up to a married man.

"Mr. Smith can give good references for being trustworthy. He wants to get some kind of work that he is able to do, so he can go to night school, so he can work into a good job. He could even do collecting work, because he can drive a car.

"Mr. Smith is 34 years old and you will find him very steady. He has also written several books, but has never had them published.

"Mr. Smith went and saw Mr. Coleman at the employment office. He also saw Mr. Paulus, head of the state vocational education for disabled people; but they haven't helped him any so far. He has run all over looking for work.

"Mr. Smith is getting quite discouraged, and he certainly needs a helping hand. He wants to work for a living and is willing to do any thing he is able to do in order to make a living. All he needs is a chance to make good, and it seems like nowadays you have to have a pull somewhere in order to get a job.

"One never knows what disability is till he or she has experienced it himself or herself.

"In God I trust you will be able to find some kind of a job that Mr. Smith can do. The 'what we are put on earth for' to give a helping hand to others when they are in need of help.

"Now I am not going to tell Mr. Smith that I have written to you till I hear from you.

"If you are interested I can have Mr. Smith to go see you if you will tell me where he could see you. You see, I do not want to build up his hope of a job and then have him disappointed. He has had enough disappointments lately.

"Please write to me real soon. I will be anxious to know if you can help any.

"Please excuse my writing. I have gone to school only 22 months in all my life, and my hands are crippled."

The letter is written in a feminine hand, and so signed.

The Bits man recalls her, and may say that she is a member of a prominent, reputable and most deserving pioneer Oregon family, whose name, if published, would be so recognized by all who know the history of this region.

The letter is published with the hope that it may result in "Mr. Smith" finding employment, such as will enable him to study for still more useful and paying work.

And, too, this letter suggests an idea. The idea is for the cripples of Oregon to make the beginnings of a great society—a great society of cripples to help cripples.

That idea comes partly from the leading editorial in the May number of "The Rotarian," official publication of the great society that covers the globe, with its main ideal "service above self," and standing for "the advancement of international understanding, goodwill, and peace through a world fellowship of business and professional men united in the ideal of service."

That editorial tells of the

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