

UMATILLA INDIANS FIRST LEARNED OF CHRISTIANITY FROM DR. WHITMAN

Tututilla Mission Directed for Many Years by Rev. J. M. Cornelison, Has Accomplished Much.

(By Rev. J. M. Cornelison)

Back to the stirring days in the eighties, when Dr. Marcus Whitman and Rev. H. B. Spaulding crossed the plains to teach Christianity to the Indians, dates the beginning of missionary work among the Umatilla Indians of the reservation.

Most people in the Northwest know in a general way about the early mission work among the Indians, begun in 1836 by Dr. Whitman and Rev. Spaulding who came west in that year with their young wives. They also know that on Nov. 27, 1847 Dr. and Mrs. Whitman, together with about a dozen others were massacred at Wallatpu where a mission church and school had been begun for the christianization and education of the Indians. Few people have read further or remember any more relative to the Indian mission work so bravely begun and carried on by Dr. Whitman. The general impression has gone forth that the mission work was dropped at the time of the massacre at Wallatpu, near Walla Walla, Wash., and that Whitman College was later built up at Walla Walla in honor of Dr. Whitman; and that nothing ever became of his mission venture. Such is wide of the real truth. It so happened that Dr. Whitman and Rev. Spaulding were sent out as missionaries under the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions which was the joint Mission Board of the Congregational and Presbyterian churches.

Churches Separated
When the two churches separated their mission work a few years later the Indian mission work, formerly at Wallatpu, but later moved to the Umatilla reservation, fell to the lot of the Presbyterian Home Mission Board, as also the Indian mission work on the Lapwai reservation in Idaho which was begun by Rev. and Mrs. Spaulding, co-laborers of Dr. and Mrs. Whitman. The good seed sown, the gospel preached, the devoted lives lived were not in vain. Those of the Indians that had become Christians under Dr. Whitman kept up their religious faith. The Christian fires still burned in many hearts. Prayers were offered up and gospel songs were sung around many a tepee as the years went by. These faithful Christian people were encouraged from time to time by visits from Rev. Spaulding, some Christian Indians or a minister trained in the faith in Idaho where a contemporary mission work had been established by Rev. and Mrs. Spaulding among the Nez Perce. The good people later moved to the great grassy plains and valley now called the Umatilla reservation for the reason that they were rich in Cayuse ponies. This outstanding feature of their wealth in such ponies seems to have gotten them the name of Cayuse Indians among the white settlers, so the name persists all today, one never hears the name Wallatpu applied to these people.

On June 17, 1852, through the help of some visiting Nez Perce minister and Rev. G. L. Deffenbaugh who had been a missionary among the Nez Perce and at that time was head of the Government school on the Lapwai Indian reservation, a church organization was effected in the home of Chief Winnamsnoot. Later a school church was built on the Tututilla flat, or valley which served the people as a place of worship till the new church was built in 1902 in a new location. During all this time from 1847 to 1902, a space of 55 years, no organized mission work had been done and no white missionary had labored among these people, yet the work of Dr. Whitman still abided in the hearts of the people.

Rev. Cornelison Accepts
A little over a half century had passed when a few of the Christian Indians made overtures to the old Presbytery of Eastern Oregon, and through it to the Home Mission Board of the Presbyterian church to send them a missionary to live among them who would learn their language and help them in every way possible. This request was made in 1895. It was granted and such a life work was presented to the graduating class of 1899 at the San Francisco Theological Seminary at San Anselmo, Cal. One young man of that class accepted the Indian work and came to the field on May 5, 1899. I was the young man and I have been at the mission continuously for the past 21 years, with the exception of about 15 months on the way to and in France in Y. M. C. A. work. Thus the mission work at Tututilla on the Umatilla reservation is seen to be a continuation of the Dr. Marcus Whitman mission so early cut down. But it had taken just a little over a half century for the church and Christian people to wake up to their responsibility and send a

REV. J. M. CORNELISON



Top view shows him as a Y. M. C. A. worker overseas and the cut below is one made from a picture taken in 1902.

missionary to follow up the work so boldly begun by Dr. Whitman and his co-laborers. Yet the present mission has a more direct and tangible connection with Dr. Whitman. For many years and down to the year 1908, Sarah Mihthorn, or Ipana-tau-la-talk who was a pupil in the Marcus Whitman school at Wallatpu was a member of the Tututilla church. Several others who are children of those who were either in the school, or knew Dr. Whitman are still faithful members of the present Tututilla church. When some of these Christian people thus connected with the old Marcus Whitman mission were taken to Walla Walla in 1908 when the Whitman monument was dedicated the people of the city were much surprised to know that there was such a mission in existence under the care of the Presbyterian Home Mission Board.

Begin Mission Work
Many times I have been asked how I began the mission work among the people here, and how I got my knowledge of the Indian language. I have in a way already explained how I began. The mission work had just continued after a fashion through all the years after the massacre. I will admit that it was after a very sorry fashion that it continued, and at a very low ebb. It is small wonder that it was almost forgotten. But real credit is due those visiting Nez Perce ministers who gave help an encouragement through all that dark half century with no white missionary to follow up and carry on the work. But as to how I got the writing and speaking knowledge of this Indian language that is very assuredly, quite a different story. It is a very interesting and long story, too long for such an article as this, so I will have to pass it over with saying, I got it very much like another fellow told his friend how to get rich quick. The advice to the friend was "Work like the devil and don't spend a cent." It is the same process that must be used in getting hold of an Indian language which is not a written language, and about which no Indian knows enough to give you any instruction other than to interpret or to tell you the meaning of the words. Absolutely no Indian here, no matter how well he speaks the Indian language, knows anything about the grammatical construction of the language.

To learn any language so as to be able to speak and write it one must know it from a grammatical standpoint. Yes, that is exactly the way I learned the Indian language. I worked like the devil. I arrived in Pendleton May 5, 1899. I preached my first sermon in Indian about the second Sunday in September of the same year, just about five months later. I taught these Indians some brand new Indian they had never heard before. And they never heard it again after I learned the language better. But they were patient with my mistakes and encouraged me by trying hard to understand me. So my language came with mutual confidence and love. In short that was about the same process used in carrying forward the mission work in all its phases of teaching, preaching, and domesticating these good people. You must be continually on the job year in and year out through a series of many years. It is the impact of continuity of service that finally gets results that will abide in such work. This has been very true of the mission work on the Umatilla reservation. During was getting his bearings, gaining the confidence of the people, perfecting himself in the language nothing seems

to have been done so far as visible results were concerned. It seemed to have been just marking time to some critics of those early days. So much so that some at least urged that the mission be discontinued. But the impact of faithfulness and continuity of service in teaching and preaching—like the prophet of old—"Precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line, here a little and there a little"—began to fructify in the transformed lives of many of the people, both old and young, after a number of years. Then the power of example of those already converted began to exert its influence. It at once became true, as in any other line of endeavor that "nothing succeeds like success." Men and women seeing the transformed lives of their fellow men began to realize that there must surely be some real "kick" in such a religious faith, if it so worked in others' lives. They too were willing to be infected with the same microbe.

I have seen these Indian people develop mentally, morally, religiously and socially during these 21 years in many remarkable ways. The government has maintained a splendid boarding school for all the children. Two years ago this school was replaced by several day schools. Moral and religious instruction has been given by a Catholic mission which has a school in connection; and by the Presbyterian Home Mission Board through its mission though no school. In many business and social ways most of these people have made just as good progress. Tepees have given way to cottages, and many have very nice homes well cared for and furnished. In years past the people have always had good means of transportation in the form of good driving teams, hacks and buggies. These have in turn given place to the best of automobiles. Much business is done by the Indians in Pendleton and other towns near the reservation. Their credit is as good as that of other citizens. The merchants know their Indian trade as their white trade and treat them the same. The Christian Indians are interested in the elections and generally cast their votes as other citizens. This was especially true when the "wet" and "dry" campaign was on in Oregon. The Tututilla temperance society rolled up a solid "dry" vote which helped to swell the "dry" totals very materially. During the war the Indians were good loyal citizens and played the game by every detail. Their sons crossed the seas in the service of their country and liberty bonds were bought to the amount of many thousands of dollars. Generous contributions were made for all war work.

Someone has asked about the ties of friendship and love between the white missionary and the Indian people. It is such relationship mutual. In the first place let me say so as to avoid all misunderstanding, in any business enterprise, institution, project or mission you will find some objector. But the other side has been more prevalent and dominant. The mutual esteem and love existing between the mission and the people has been far more often to the front. Love for all and service for all has been the policy. Just one example from many will show something of the esteem. When I was leaving France to enter the service in Y. M. C. A. war work it happened to be Memorial Day 1918. The service was being held at the grave yard just back of the Tututilla church. By request of the crowd of Christian Indians present the missionary was asked to designate a resting place in the grave yard for his body in case he did not return alive. He was asked to make arrangements in his will and through his insurance that his body be returned to be buried in that designated spot. This was all done in good faith and such arrangements made. It was a touching incident and got under the skin of the missionary to think that the people to whom and for whom he had given his life and training desired his bones to rest with them till the resurrection morn. Then there was another tug of heart when at the close of the service the missionary found three big cars lined up each with the other for the distinction of taking the missionary for his last ride to the train before leaving for New York and on to France.

There was a Hudson six and two Buick sixes. In the Hudson there was not a soul except a little 17 year old girl whom the missionary had baptized in infancy and later received into the church. Which should it be? All waited the decision. I did not wish to give any offense to any one of the people yet it was a physical impossibility to ride to town in three cars. While he thus hesitated a sharp command came from that little black eyed girl which was heard by all the rest in line. "You get in here Mr. Cornelison, you asked me several days ago to take you to the train, and now I am here to do it." She flashed defiance at the other drivers who were men. The missionary humbly obeyed. The car plunged forward and the other cars ate her dust all the way to town. It was thus I left the mission work at Tututilla and by consent of the Presbytery of Pendleton entered overseas Y. M. C. A. work. I joined the motor transport department as a truck driver for the reason that I desired to get right into the thick of the fight and work right down among the men and just as near the front lines as a welfare worker was allowed to go. I got my desire to my heart's delight. In Paris after a conference I was assigned to the 27th New York division which was at the time of my arrival fighting in Belgium "in Flanders fields" just back of Kemmel Hill and Ypres. Then the "Y" was very short of transportation so I was sent for about ten days to conduct a canteen close behind the lines, so close that we were not allowed to open the canteen till dark. For just as soon as any one got out in the road before the canteen the whiz bangs began to come over.

Before we left Belgium I got my Ford truck. I did my first motor-transport work in and around Proven, Belgium. I had my first experience in driving in the pitch darkness on strange roads where no lights were allowed. I finally developed regular owl eyes and didn't need any lights. I followed that same 27th division during the rest of the war into rest camp

and later on over the strongest part of the Hindenburg line where the St. Quentin canal runs through a five mile tunnel. The Germans had filled with a whole division of troops. My old Ford was seen going and coming so much and I was always on it or under it so as to keep it rolling that it became known as "Jimmy's Sweetheart" throughout the division. I am very proud of my record with that same Ford. It was old when it came into my hands, yet I kept it in repair and rolling for the nine months that I was driving in the hardest possible service. Two other new Fords that were handed by other drivers were done for and in the junk pile as they tried to do what my old Ford was doing alone. While the 27th and 30th divisions were helping the British army to break the Hindenburg line at the St. Quentin canal we were in such devastated country and where no civilians had been for nearly four years that it was impossible to get a cook for the 26 or more "Y" men that were following the 27th division. I consented to get down from my Ford throne and cook for nearly a month till we were ready to come out of the lines late in October.

After that I continued to drive till in May 1919 I was sent out from headquarters into the Ballon region out of Le Mans to do repair work on Ford cars. Some time later in May the large Cafeteria opened in Le Mans by the Y. M. C. A. was having trouble. A phone message came to Ballon saying "Tell Jimmy to come into Le Mans bag and baggage." When I arrived the management showed me the big Cafeteria and its possibilities. I began that work and enjoyed it very much for it was a place where one could do real service for the men as they came through that embarkation center. We fed from 1500 to 2000 per day, with the best of food and at a most reasonable rate. Later in June we started an ice cream factory in one side of the big "Y" building where we made from 100 to 150 gallons of ice cream per day. Every bit of this ice cream was served to the men in the various camps and billets absolutely free of cost. It was done as a welfare work. The Cafeteria and ice cream plant were conducted till August 1919 when the embarkation center was closed. While operating the Cafeteria and ice cream plant I had at my service a ton truck, a lighter truck and a touring car. I turned two of them into headquarters and drove the touring car into Paris where I turned it into headquarters there. I left Paris about the middle of August 1919 and came home by way of Brest. I left New York on August 25 visiting Washington D. C. and then my old home and people at Richmond, Ky. for a few days. I arrived in Pendleton September 15, 1919 during the week when the Victory Round-Up was on. I am glad to be home still in one piece for I am reminded of the fact as I look over my daily diary which I kept carefully while in France, that I missed hundreds of good chances to be killed. When shells were coming over either night or day I was willing to say that I never sought safety in a dugout, but I am just as frank to say that I ducked my head on several occasions on the principle of "safety first" so as to let them go by, even though the passing whiz bangs might have been 100 to 500 feet above my head. Those that went on far and those that dropped nearby made the same tune till they hit somewhere, so what could a fellow do but instinctively duck.

TRIPLE SERVICE (ECONOMIC-HYGIENIC-STYLE) Nemo's CORSETS Makes You Save

Their *Economic Service* Saves your money.
Their *Hygienic Service* Saves your health.
Their *Style Service* Saves your figure.



Self-Reducing Corsets (No. 327 illustrated) are made in 19 styles for various types of stout figure. They permanently reduce the abdomen \$5.25 to \$9. Wonderlift Corsets (No. 560 illustrated) are made in 11 styles. They prevent and care for certain physical weaknesses and improve the figure. \$6.50 to \$25. Kop Service Corsets (No. 514 illustrated) are made in 14 styles. Each does some specific thing to improve the style of the wearer. \$4.50 to \$9.25.

Alexanders

QUALITY SERVICE



Nemo's JUSPUB
BRASSIERES
REMODEL THE FIGURE ABOVE THE WAIST
AS THE CORSET DOES BELOW
POPULAR PRICES
NEMO HYGIENIC FASHION TO THE FUTURE OF MEDICAL SCIENCE, NEW YORK.



Blue Ribbon Flour

MADE FROM CHOICE BLUESTEM WHEAT.
EVERY SACK GUARANTEED

Byers Turkey Red Flour
For those who are used to a hard-wheat flour.

Pendleton Roller Mills

Pendleton Cycle Co.

HARTMAN LONG, Prop.

REVERE
AJAX

KOKOMO
SAVAGE

Tires

Bicycles and Supplies
Vulcanizing

228 E. Court

Phone 144