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The Board of Home Missions

OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN
THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

No. 53 Fifth Avenue,

New York.

The Evangelization of the Great West,

BY THE

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PORTLAND, OREGON.

There is one fundamental truth concerning the West which the East has not yet learned—and that is that the people of the West are Eastern people. The United States Census Reports reveal three significant facts relating to this subject. The first is that the population of the West is increasing at a marvelous rate. The second is that the people are chiefly of American birth, the bulk of the European immigration, especially of the lower class, remaining in the East. The third is that the Atlantic States show a large excess of females over males, Massachusetts alone having eighty thousand more women than men, while the Pacific States show a large excess of males over females. These things show that the West is not only being rapidly settled, but that it is being settled by Eastern men.

And they are a good class of men, too. Many of them are intelligent farmers, who, tired of struggling against impoverished soil, rigorous winters, and droughty summers, are seeking the rich agricultural regions of the West. Many are city residents of considerable wealth and culture, who are attracted partly by the milder and more healthful climate, partly by the superior opportunities for investment which the West affords. Some of these men are of high intelligence and capacity, the best type of Eastern business men.

But the majority is composed of young men, ambitious, energetic young men—the other kind usually settles apathetically near the old

home. But when the wide-awake young man is ready to start in life for himself, he finds that the already-developed East offers comparatively few opportunities to one who has no capital or influence. So the typical young man announces that he has decided to "go West and grow up with the country." The announcement comes with a shock to the parents, but they do not oppose him. The mother packs his trunk, bedewing each article with her tears, and not forgetting to put in a Bible. The eventful day comes. The good-byes are said. The young man goes off with elastic step and eager heart to make his fortune, but the gray-haired father and mother, who bravely kept up till the boy had gone, turn away, and sob as if their hearts would break. Not a night falls thereafter till their dying day that they do not kneel and pray God to bless their boy. Ah, how often does the Western pastor receive their pleading letters: "Our boy has gone to your city. He is a child of many prayers. Will you not look him up, for the Master's sake and for ours?" The young man arrives in the distant city. He takes a little seven-by-nine room, furnished very differently from the comfortable one he had been accustomed to at home. He is a little lonely and homesick at first, but he has a brave heart and willing hands, and he goes vigorously to work. Perhaps he does not succeed in finding the kind of employment he had set his heart upon; but he is willing to do anything that is honest, and ere long he begins to rise. He acquires wealth. He builds a beautiful home. He purchases books and pictures. He becomes prominent and influential, a successful business or professional man, demanding for himself and for his city every modern improvement.

Along with these come, of course, many of a less desirable class; but taking them altogether, the people who seek the West average high in intelligence, self-reliance and aggressive force. A large proportion of them are college graduates. Indeed, in point of education and mental alertness, the people of a typical Western city average considerably higher than the people of a typical Eastern city. They are withal generous, chivalric and public-spirited; and their keen sense of humor finds abundant source of gratification in the condescending airs assumed by travelers from the East, who innocently imagine that they possess superior wisdom because they come from the older parts of the country. It usually takes about six months for a new arrival to get over the habit of saying, "Now let me tell you how we did that in the East." But after he does get over it, he usually settles down into a useful and sensible fellow. Never shall I forget my relief when, laden with the cares incident to the coming of the General Assembly to

Portland, I learned that a kind-hearted New York woman had written inquiring whether a piano could be found in Portland for the use of the Woman's meeting, and offering to take up a subscription and purchase one in the East, if one could not be had in Portland. It appeared providential. We had a ten-thousand dollar pipe-organ, a two-hundred thousand dollar church, a million dollar hotel, and any number of costly edifices, both public and private. We had, moreover, thousands of people who could play the piano. But the piano itself was the thing which was worrying us. There was some talk in Portland of erecting a monument to that woman, whose intelligent appreciation of Western needs was only equaled by her willingness to supply them.

We hear much about the superiority of New England, but New England's choicest and strongest men are now in the West. She rears bright sons as of old, but as soon as they graduate from her colleges they flock to the West. When one of our Oregon ministers asked an intelligent young lady in Massachusetts why there were so many single women in New England, she replied, "Because the best young men go West, and we would rather die old maids than marry the kind that are left." You would be astonished if you knew how many of the men who are at the head of the large business and religious enterprises of the West were New England born. This is particularly true of the Pacific Coast. On the other hand, the places of these New England youth are being rapidly taken by the lower class of foreigners, so that the New England of to-day is rapidly deteriorating. The New York *Independent* calls attention to the fact that the communicants of the Roman Catholic Church in New England exceed in number those of all the Protestant bodies combined by nearly a quarter of a million. And this, not because the descendants of the Puritans have been converted to the Catholic faith, but because they have emigrated to the Great West, while the loss in numbers has been made good by foreign immigration. Edward Atkinson says that Boston is now an Irish and Catholic city, and that out of 1400 children, whom he found in two schools at the North end of Boston, more than 1000 were children of Italians and Jews. President Hyde, of Bowdoin College, says that New England is now more Pagan than Puritan. Well may *The Interior* say that the best type of Anglo-Saxon character will soon be found, not in Old England nor in New England, but in Western States which have been peopled by the best brain and brawn of the mother-lands.

And so the West is rapidly filling up with intelligent people. Myriads of farmers are hewing down the forests, irrigating the arid

regions, turning uplands into cultivated fields, valleys into fruitful gardens, and hillsides into fragrant orchards, till the wilderness is beginning to bloom and blossom like the rose. Thousands of enterprising capitalists and young men whose brains and energy are their capital are causing towns to spring up on every side, are erecting buildings, opening mines, establishing factories, building ships, and constructing railways, till the roar of commerce is heard above the murmur of the forest, and the walls of an empire of majestic proportions are steadily rising. Marvelous in all eyes is the rapidity and splendor of that development. "Since those prehistoric days," says Barrows, "when Asia tilted toward Europe and spilled into it its Aryan hordes, there has not been such a column of the human race moving in one direction, as is now going out into our West and up into our Northwest. Heretofore such emigrations of mankind have served to divide up universal history into eras, and we are now opening for a new alcove in the historic library of the world."

And the resources of the West are numerous enough and varied enough to give solid basis for this growth. We heard much a generation ago about the Great American Desert. We now know that there is no Great American Desert. The man who said that the great plains of the West were like the infernal regions in that they only lacked water and good society to make them desirable places of residence, was mistaken only in part. For unlike Hell, both water and good society can be brought to the plains, and are being brought to them. Those sage-brush deserts have been shown to be as rich as the bottom lands of Egypt, and to yield most wondrously. But even apart from these, there are millions upon millions of fertile acres, billions of feet of standing timber, inexhaustible deposits of coal, and mineral riches which surpass those "of Ormus or of Ind." The climate, too, is so diversified that the West can produce the fruit of Oregon and the cotton of Texas, the wheat of Minnesota and the corn of Nebraska, the oranges of California and the nuts of Arizona. Nowhere else in the world has nature been more prodigal of her riches. The country is so vast that a population of hundreds of millions could be supported. Aye, France, Germany and Great Britain could be put into one of our Western States, and then have room enough left for a principality or two. Oregon and Washington could hold and feed the entire present population of the United States, and the Pacific Coast could spread the tables for the world! While as for Western scenery, experienced travelers have gazed upon its matchless beauty and majesty only to exclaim in marvel

and awe, "He hath not dealt so with any nation." It was Joseph Cook who wrote of the Pacific Northwest :

'Ten archangels watch the land,
White with snow and gray with sand,
Servants of the Lord of Hosts,
On our mellow sunset coasts.

In their robes are starry gems,
On their foreheads diadems ;
Far aloft their falchions flame,
Taught of God what they proclaim.

Mystery of blue and white,
Purple shadows, scarlet light ;
Winter there to summer calls,
Avalanche to waterfalls.

Who ascends them orders hears ;
At their summits God appears ;
And His hosts encamp with Him,
On the whole horizon's rim."

Yes, "It is a good land which the Lord our God doth give us, a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven."

But when we consider the religious condition of this Great West, our exhilaration quickly gives place to soberness and even anxiety. For notwithstanding the high average grade of intelligence in the West, there are some things which make its evangelization very difficult.

Prominent among these is the material pre-occupation of the people. Most of them have come to the West for money, and not a few of them follow the advice which an avaricious father is said to have given his son—"My son, get money. Get it honestly if you can, but get money." Bryce has a remarkable chapter on "The Temper of the West." He says that he found the heat and pressure and hurry of life always growing as he followed the path of the sun, and that the people seemed intoxicated by the majestic scale of the nature in which their lot is cast. "They see all around them railways being built, telegraph wires laid, steamboat lines projected, cities springing up in the solitudes, and their imagination revels in these sights and signs of progress." Watch the crowds of people which throng the streets of a typical Western city. See how eager their faces are, how restless their movements! Every man is determined to get rich. He knows that there will be great cities in the West. He privately thinks he knows just where they will be, and he is determined to get as many corner lots as possible before the rush becomes greater. It is hard work to induce such men to listen to the messages of religion. The world has taken complete possession of them.

Another difficulty is the feeling of emancipation from restraint. Many men in the West are without families, and therefore without the

restraints of home. They are in a new country where few people know them, and where standards are yet imperfect. They see many things openly tolerated which were at least covered up in the East. Godlessness and infidelity are more prevalent and insolent. Vice is more open, not because the people are naturally more vicious, but because the pre-occupation of good men and the newness of the country leave the evil-disposed a freer field. I refer now, of course, not to such exceptional cities as Portland and Los Angeles and Denver, which every traveler knows to be among the finest of American cities, but to western towns as a class.

Then there is the demoralizing influence exerted by Eastern scapegraces who go West in the hope of finding a place where their past misdeeds will not be known. It is invariably a delusive hope, so close is the connection between the East and the West afforded by modern facilities for inter-communication. But such people come. Mining excitements attract adventurers from all parts of the world. Gamblers follow in their wake, while the black sheep of Eastern churches almost invariably seek the West. The exasperating feature of this difficulty is the habit of many Eastern pastors of giving these fallen church-members clear certificates of dismissal to our churches, and sometimes even highly commendatory personal letters. Grievously are Western churches occasionally thus imposed upon. As a matter of fact, the West is the worst place in the world to send a man to reform. If he will not behave in the East where he is under the restrictions of home and accustomed society and a stronger religious sentiment, he certainly will not in the West. At any rate, if the East expects us to take care of its wayward sons and embezzling clerks and disgraced church-members, it ought to feel that gifts for the maintenance of Western schools and churches are not altogether charity.

Another serious difficulty is the tardiness of Eastern church-members in uniting with the churches of the West. Many who were active church workers in the East form no relation with the churches of the West. Usually they mean well, but they defer the presentation of their certificates, either because they do not feel settled, or because they shrink from breaking the ties that bind them to "the dear old church." The result is nearly always a deterioration of the spiritual life. After a few years, such persons are apt to become to communities what derelicts are to the ocean—waterlogged wrecks, drifting aimlessly about, and seriously menacing the safety of every voyager. You may have heard of the little girl who had been rummaging in her mother's trunk. There she found a "church letter" which her mother had

neglected to present to the church into whose neighborhood she had moved. The little explorer rushed into her mother's presence, shouting:—"O mamma, I've found your religion in your trunk!" It is sad to think how much piety in this world will not bear transportation! It is a long distance from the East to the West. Baggage men are rough, and it often happens that the piety gets to its destination in bad shape—like the wife whom the Hudson's Bay Fur Company's employee had sent to him from London, and concerning whom he ruefully wrote in the receipt book:—"Received one wife; condition slightly damaged." It passes comprehension how any one who professes to be a Christian can stand idly by while churches are engaged in a life and death struggle with iniquity. Now, as of old, the call is, "Who is on the Lord's side?" Shame on the man who, bearing the name of Christ, refuses to identify himself with the cause of Christ in the community in which he lives, and where alone he can be of any use. Eastern sessions might assist in overcoming this evil if they would insist upon their emigrating members taking letters and presenting them. It is hard for Western pastors to contend, not only against the active opposition of infidels, but against the indifference of those whose arrival had excited glad hopes of reinforcement.

Then if the East has its burden of care for the Bohemian, the Italian and the Pole, the West has its burden of care for the Indian, the Mormon, the Mexican and the Chinaman.

So taking it altogether, the atmosphere of the West is not favorable to the prosecution of religious work. Many men of good intentions, particularly young men, are swept from their religious moorings into the maelstrom of worldliness. The West is notoriously the hardest place in the country for ministers. The high development of intelligence but the low development of reverence, the prevalence of godlessness and infidelity, the lack of restraint, and the absorption with material things, combine to make extraordinary demands upon a minister, while at the same time denying him the salary and facilities necessary for the performance of the best work. I speak not from personal experience, for "the lines have fallen unto me in pleasant places;" but I speak from personal observation of general Western conditions. "Is a minister respected in your State?" an Eastern man asked of the Bishop of Montana. "Yes," was the reply, "if he is a man deserving of respect, but he gets no additional standing from the fact of his being a minister, as he does in the East." In the older parts of the country, there is usually a reverence for the Church, the Bible, the Sabbath and the Clergy. In the West there is none, save

in a few exceptional communities. It is no wonder, therefore, that pastorates in the West are often short and troubled. Scores of ministers, who were successful pastors of large Eastern churches, have gone to the far West only to experience heart-breaking mortification and failure. It requires a high grade of pulpit and executive ability to build up and hold a church of even ordinary size in an average frontier town.

Hard also to bear is the criticism of some Eastern ministers. An elegantly arrayed and exquisitely perfumed Eastern doctor of divinity, making a tour of the West, will look daintily over his gold-rimmed eye-glasses, as he rides about town in a carriage, and magisterially exclaim:—"Ahem! Ahem! too many churches in these small towns! Sad waste of missionary money! I must write an article to the religious press at once, calling attention to this matter!" That very man is pastor of a church whose edifice stands on an avenue literally lined with superfluous, half-filled churches, while his own State is thickly dotted with towns as badly over-stocked with churches as any in the West. Yet he blames the new West for not being able to solve a problem which the older East has conspicuously failed to solve. When the East has learned how to overcome the evils of sectarianism, evils which grow out of and are inseparable from the divided condition of Protestantism, there will be time enough to talk to the West. Meantime, I want to say that I have traveled over the West from St. Paul to San Diego, and from Port Townsend to New Orleans, and that while there has been over-crowding in some instances, the reports of that over-crowding have been grossly exaggerated. Our Western presbyteries are increasingly careful in this respect, and where the principles of comity have been violated, it has not usually been by our pushing into others' fields, but by others pushing into ours.

Still harder to bear is the slight often put upon the ministry of our smaller Western towns. The foreign missionary is regarded as a hero and saint, and justly, but the home missionary is too often regarded as an inferior man who could not succeed in any other field. That he is not a Brooks or a Spurgeon may be frankly admitted. But in earnestness, and devotion, and self-sacrificing love for God and man, the Western home missionary is the peer of any, and the hardships of his lot are not less trying than those of the foreign missionary. Let me describe to you a typical case:

Here is a young man of fair ability and promise who has given his heart to God. He might go into some secular calling, live in the town of his choice, and earn at least a comfortable living. But he sees his

country's need of the Gospel. He hears the cry sounding in his ears, "Woe is me if I preach not the Gospel!" He enters college. Like most of those who seek the ministry, he is poor. The Board of Education can give him but one hundred of the three or four hundred dollars it costs him each year. But by strict economy, by rising early and retiring late, by sawing wood or weeding gardens or sweeping dormitories, while his class-mates are playing ball, he manages to finish his college and seminary courses, and to stand on the threshold of the ministry. The prospect from a worldly view-point is not inviting. Some young men run no risk in entering the ministry. They stood first in the class-room and in the prize exhibition, and however modest they may be, they cannot but know that success in college creates a fair presumption of success in the ministry. But this young man took no honors. He knows that he is never likely to be called to important pulpits with large salaries. He was an average student, and he can expect to be only an average minister, and he is told that the average minister receives a salary of only about \$700 a year, less than the wages of a skilled mechanic. And yet he knows that he is needed, that there are hundreds of average churches which must be served by average men or not served at all. The call sounds louder than ever in his ears. He determines to go. He is engaged to a young woman who has been delicately nurtured amid all the refinements of Eastern society. She is a woman of education and culture, but she loves her betrothed husband, and like him she has a high and solemn sense of duty to God. So she goes with him. He is sent to a feeble, struggling church on the frontier. The town is nothing but a straggling collection of shanties, lining the one street. It is a place of frightful wickedness. Half the buildings are saloons or brothels or gambling hells. Sunday is the worst day in the week. There is no Sunday west of the Mississippi River, he is informed. There is no church building in the town—no place where services can be held, except a hall over a saloon. So he begins his ministry in that hall, the service interrupted more than once by the ribald laughter and fierce oaths of the carousing crew below.

Meantime, the minister's home is a rude, poorly-furnished cabin. The necessaries of life are ruinously high, his salary ruinously small and irregularly paid. One morning the wife says to her husband, "John, I really don't know what we shall do for clothes for the children. I've stitched and mended and darned till they are covered with patches, and now Tommy's coat is out at the elbows, and Charlie's pants are out at the knees, and Jessie's shoes are all to pieces. I am just ashamed to have them go anywhere, they look so ragged." And

the poor little woman begins to cry. "Cheer up, Mary," answers John, encouragingly, "The check from the Board will certainly be here to-day, and then we will fix them all up comfortably, and you too!" Then he puts on his hat and walks briskly down to the Post Office. By and by he comes back, but with slower steps and drooping head. Mary looks up inquiringly, and he chokes down a sob as he hands her a letter informing him that scanty receipts have compelled the Board to cut down his appropriation ten per cent., and that the first payment will be sent as soon as the treasury of the Board will permit. What do they do? Winter coming, wind whistling, snow flying, and no money for clothing, for fuel, for food! God only knows what they do. It is a mystery which I have never been able to fathom. Some people assert that ministers are poor financiers. Brethren, if they were not exceptionally good financiers, they could not live. No other class can make a dollar go farther. Oh, the backaches, the heartaches, the sleepless nights, in that home! Oh, the loneliness, the privations, the discouragements! Yet together husband and wife struggle on year after year, holding up the Cross in the midst of recklessness and vice, pleading with men to turn from their wickedness unto God, giving their lives to the most exhausting and unselfish toil, laying amid sore pain and tears the foundations of a Christian community, and never making a complaint.

At last he breaks down. His salary stops. He has made no provision for this. He could hardly live when he was at work, to say nothing of saving. Want comes to the door and walks in. The children cry for bread. The wife grows pale and thin. The great denomination which he has so self-sacrificingly served doles out to him a pittance of \$200, perhaps \$300, a year, but that is all. Oh, it is pitiful, that these worn-out soldiers of the Cross should have to sit under the shadow of the poorhouse, with the potter's field beyond, while waiting for the chariot to bear them away to their Father's house! But they are doing it, Oh men and brethren; doing it all over the Great West! The world makes little account of them; but on that day when God shall equalize the inequalities of earth, that poor home missionary and his patient wife may be given a larger place in His kingdom than many who occupied more conspicuous and comfortable places on earth!

On the floor of this Assembly, the other day, I was stirred to hear home missionaries slightly spoken of, as if they were not wisely or conscientiously conducting the affairs committed to them. "I wot that through ignorance ye did it." When in the British Parliament the

Duke of Wellington heard the Irish maligned, he sprang to his feet and exclaimed, "Hold! I have seen the Irish do their duty!" Mr. Moderator, I live among home missionaries. I have been in their homes, sat at their tables, slept in their beds, preached in their churches. I have talked with them and prayed with them. I have counseled with them in their Presbyteries and Synods. I know the men and I know their work, and I can certify that the home missionaries are doing their duty, and doing it nobly. All honor to them! Let them be accorded the respect they so well deserve. They are preaching the gospel of Jesus in mountain towns and mining camps, on the plains of the far West and among the masses of the great cities. They are doing the hardest and most thankless of pioneer work. They are fighting on the picket line where the danger is greatest and the inspiration least. But they are fighting with a persistence and a heroism which ought to thrill the people of God to new zeal for our country's evangelization.

And do the labors of these missionaries represent no value to the nation? Listen to a story of home missions—a story which unites the fascination of a romance and the truthfulness of history :

September 4th, 1802, a boy was born in Rushville, N. Y. He grew up to be a Christian physician. He was thirty years of age when the country was thrilled by the piteous story of four Flathead Indians, who, having heard from a wandering trapper that the white men had a Book which told about the Great Spirit and a heaven better than the happy hunting grounds, had journeyed thousands of miles to St. Louis to obtain it, only to meet with disappointment in that then wicked and Roman Catholic city. While they lingered, the two older men died, and one of the younger men was taken ill. Never has Macedonian cry found more eloquently pathetic utterance than in the simple lament of the remaining Indian at the farewell council with the white men : " I came to you over a trail of many moons from the setting sun. You were the friend of my fathers, who have all gone the long way. I came with one eye partly opened, for more light for my people, who sit in darkness. I go back with both eyes closed. How can I go back blind, to my blind people? I made my way to you with strong arms, through many enemies and strange lands, that I might carry back much to them. I go back with both arms broken and empty. The two fathers who came with us—the braves of many winters and wars—we leave asleep here by your great water and wigwam. They were tired in many moons, and their moccasins wore out. My people sent me to get the white man's Book of Heaven. You took me where you allow

your women to dance, as we do not ours, but the Book was not there. You took me where they worship the Great Spirit with candles, but the Book was not there. You showed me the images of good spirits and pictures of the good land beyond, but the Book was not among them to tell us the way. I am going back the long, sad trail to my people of the dark land. You make my feet heavy with burdens of gifts, and my moccasins will grow old in carrying them, but the Book is not among them. When I tell my poor, blind people, after one more snow, in the big council, that I did not bring the Book, no word will be spoken by our old men or by our young braves. One by one they will rise up and go out in silence. My people will die in darkness, and they will go on the long path to the other hunting grounds. No white man will go with them, and no white man's Book to make the way plain. I have no more words."

When Marcus Whitman heard of that mournful scene, he said, "I will carry the Bible to those poor people." Would his betrothed wife go with him? She would. And so would the Rev. Henry N. Spaulding, a young New York minister, and his bride. When the latter was warned that the journey would be a long and trying one, and that she was not strong, she replied in a paraphrase of the noble words of old: "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die on the Rocky Mountains for the name of the Lord Jesus." And so they set out for Oregon. Was there ever another such a bridal trip? The snail-like pace of the creaking wagon, the solitude of the great wilderness, the prowling of savage beasts and still more savage Indians, the desolate expanse of sand and sage-brush, the solemn majesty of the snow-crowned mountains, the hot and weary days, and the nightly bivouac with its humble meal, its hymn of praise and prayer of faith, and then its peaceful slumber, while the "stars come out and watch the silent camp, even as they watched the tents of Abraham when emigrating to his Oregon." At Fort Hall they are told that a wagon can go no farther, but Whitman insists on trying it, and succeeds in making that wagon historic by bringing it into the valley of the Columbia, where on the banks of the tributary Walla Walla he establishes a missionary station.

The mighty region known as Oregon was then disputed territory. When the Joint Boundary Commission had run the line between the possessions of Great Britain and those of the United States, from the Lake of the Woods westward along the forty-ninth parallel, they had stopped at the Rocky Mountains, chiefly because the region beyond

was considered not only worthless but forever beyond the reach of emigration. When the mistake was discovered, Great Britain claimed everything North of the Columbia River from the point where the forty-ninth parallel touches it, on the ground that her fur traders were in sole possession. The United States refusing to concur, an agreement of joint occupation was entered into. It soon became evident that that nation would obtain the coveted territory, which should be in practical possession through the majority of inhabitants. The English made every effort to strengthen their interests, and at the same time industriously circulated reports throughout the United States that Oregon was not only unfit for colonization but inaccessible. In the fall of 1842, Whitman learns that the English are exulting over the victory which they feel to be assured. His determination is quickly made, and although winter is approaching, in an incredibly short time he sets out for the East on horseback to warn his countrymen of their impending loss and to convince them of the value and accessibility of Oregon. Longfellow has written of the ride of Paul Revere, but where is the poet who shall adequately sing of the ride of Marcus Whitman, not for a few miles at a midnight hour, but across a continent for half a year? Who shall tell of its loneliness, its peril, its privations, as day after day, week after week, month after month, he faced wintry blasts, floundered through drifting snow forded icy streams, fled from hostile Indians, clambered up mountains, galloped across plains, till at last "that man of purpose and fur and frosted fingers" burst into the presence of the nation's rulers, convinced an astonished government and people of the importance of saving Oregon, and started back at the head of an emigrant train destined to settle for all time the question of Oregon's accessibility from the States? It is October, 1843, nearly a year from the time of his departure. The patient wife stands in the doorway of her lonely cabin on the Walla Walla, and for the thousandth time anxiously scans the horizon in the direction where her loved husband had vanished as he rode off into the darkness and gloom of that fearful winter. But hark! "Again the clatter of a horse's feet is heard on the Walla Walla, and the rider leaves stirrup for the threshold of his cabin door. There follow him down the mountain side and into that splendid valley, in long, weary file, jaded and battered, and mended after mountain style, two hundred emigrant wagons. It was," exclaims Barrows, "the army of occupation for Oregon!"

Four years later, the heroic Whitman found a martyr's grave. But the Oregon he saved to his country now includes three great States, whose richness is attracting the attention of the world, whose vast

areas are traversed by five transcontinental railways, whose churches are centres of missionary influence extending even to remote Alaska, and in whose metropolitan city a General Assembly has met to exclaim in wonder and praise : " What hath God wrought ! "

And what shall be said of the value of missionary work all over the land—the souls saved, the communities purified, the schools and colleges founded, the religious character of the swiftly advancing nation in large measure determined? Is there any work grander than this? Any more valuable? Any question more pressing than its continuance? Men and brethren, this work of evangelization must go on. We are called to it by every consideration of patriotism and religion. It is the cause of country, the cause of humanity, and the cause of God. We must evangelize the West for the sake of the people who are already there and who are going there. They are souls for whom Christ died as well as the hordes of Africa. We must evangelize it for the sake of our country, of which it is an integral and important part. In 1803, Robert Livingstone told Napoleon that " we should not send a settler across the Mississippi for a hundred years." That century has not yet expired, and the centre of population for the entire country is already near the Mississippi River, and ere another decade it is likely to cross it. May God have mercy on our country if the coming millions of the West are not pervaded by the gospel of Christ! Whether the West wants to be evangelized or not, we must evangelize it. We cannot afford to leave so influential a part of our country to godlessness and its attendant perils. Nay, we dare not disobey the God who has commanded us to " go up and possess the land," and who will punish us if we disobey, as He punished Israel of old. The people of the West are doing all they can for themselves, laboring with splendid intelligence and devotion, and giving more *per capita* than most Eastern synods. But their numbers are yet few, the region to be supplied is vast, and they need the same help which the East received when similarly situated. That help should be given now, ere the formative period passes and fixity of character is attained.

And we must evangelize the West for the sake of the world, whose evangelization, in the providence of God, largely waits upon America. No other nation has been so richly blessed. How we love to recount the wondrous facts! But hold! Who made this land? Who put the gold into its hills and the fertility into its soil? Who grew these stately forests and stocked these teeming waters? And who determined the times of your living, and the bounds of your habitation, and gave you these faculties for acquisition and development? Ah, this is the hand

of God! And when God gives men blessings like these, He will require an account of their stewardship. It is impossible to doubt that God would have us exemplify the brotherhood of man. He would have us exemplify a spiritual faith. He would make us a sanctified nation, through which unmeasured spiritual blessings shall come to the world. "The wondrous facts of American history," exclaims Strong, "are the mighty alphabet with which God writes His prophecies. May we not, by a careful laying together of the letters, spell out something of His meaning? It seems to me that God, with infinite wisdom and skill, is training the Anglo-Saxon race for an hour sure to come in the world's future. Is it manifest that the Anglo-Saxon holds in his hands the destinies of mankind for ages to come? Is it evident that the United States is to be the home of this race? Is it true that the Great West is to dominate the nation's future? Then may God open the eyes of this generation! When Napoleon drew up his troops under the shadows of the pyramids, he said to his soldiers: 'Remember that from yonder heights forty centuries look down on you!' Men of this generation, from the pyramid top of opportunity on which God has set us we look down on forty centuries! We stretch our hand into the future with power to mould the destinies of unborn millions. We occupy the Gibraltar of the ages which commands the world's future."

" We are living, we are dwelling,
In a grand and awful time,
In an age on ages telling,
To be living is sublime."

Talk about the silver question, and the labor question! The question of America, the question demanding the highest and broadest statemanship, is the evangelization of the Great West. Every other good thing to America and to the world will follow in the wake of that. High on the roll of the nation's great will yet be written the names of the men who most clearly saw this and gladly devoted their splendid administrative abilities to its achievement, and conspicuous on that roll will be the names of those sainted patriots—Marcus Whitman and Aaron Lindsley, Cyrus Dickson and Henry Kendall.

Will the Christian hosts of our land heed the call of God to carry on this work? Will they recognize their duty and rise to it? Will they devote to it their noblest energies, their richest gifts? I believe that they will. Aye, they are already doing it. Faster than the population moves the Church of God! Mightier than the triumphs of commerce are the triumphs of the Cross of Christ! We scan the horizon with anxiety, and yet an anxiety not unmingled with exultation,

for amid all the clash and tumult of worldliness and sin, we discern evidences that God is yet to fill our beloved land with the glory of the Lord ! Even now

“ Day gleams are o’er it brightening,
 And promise clothes the soil ;
 Wide fields, for harvest whitening,
 Invite the reapers toil.
 Great Author of salvation,
 Hasten, hasten the glorious day,
 When we, a ransomed nation,
 Thy sceptre shall obey !”

Oh, fathers and brethren, let us rise to the demands of this imperial opportunity ! Let us grapple with this question in the might of God ! Let us consecrate to it our tears and prayers, our cares and toils ! May the Spirit of the Living God anoint us all for better service, and fill us all with His mighty power ! Ofttimes, perhaps, we shall be depressed by the wickedness and indifference about us. But let us remember that God reigns, and that His Word shall not return unto Him void. Like Bishop Morris of my own State, I have toiled painfully up that majestic pile of perpetual snow in the Cascade Range known as Mount Hood, and have crossed dry-shod on my upward way the bed of a stream in which there were but trickling rivulets of water and occasional shallow pools. But when I have returned toward evening, I have found the dry bed of the morning filled to the banks with rushing, roaring water. “ The sun had risen in his strength, and penetrating every canyon and crevasse with his warm and genial rays, had loosened the snowbound waters, which, flooding the empty channels, poured down their mighty currents to cheer and refresh the mountain slopes, and the broad valleys, on to the great sea. And I have said, Is not this an allegory ? You and I, my brethren, are toiling, in the providence of God, in the morning of the history of our beloved Church in this fair land. But it shall be for those who come after us, it may be for some of us, ere we are called home, to stand upon these banks in another age, when the gracious thaw has come and filled all these broad and deep channels to the brim—even when through the blessed influences of the Spirit from on high, the rivers of the flood thereof shall make glad the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High.” In anticipation of that day of joy and gladness, we will continue to lift up our prayer : “ Turn again our captivity, O Lord, as the streams in the south. They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.” May God hasten the day in His time !