

See & Say Bless

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When, in the late autumn of 1834, a tall, some-
what spare, dark visaged man, knocked along
at the closed portals of a heathens empire, which
through all years had shadowed and shroud-
ed the most sun-lit part of North America.
It was a reversed Thermopylae; the three hundred
assaulting, the ~~two~~^{ten} thousand defending the
Ipsos. To him there was an hour of stumbling patrol.
To the thousands of ~~the~~ who, with us, were remem-
bering the barbaric deities of which so long &
so popilepsy ^{had} been the reaction of their relentless
gods, it boded little. Living in the present, with
nothing but dreamy legends of the past, and no
soul-prophecies of the future, they did not - how
could they? - unravel the augury. Him and his
mission they did not fear, they could not love.
Then he pitied, - had pitied - when, thousands of
miles away, his Christ-lit soul had heard ^{ed} whis-
pering down the western winds the low call of
their sighing spirits as they wailed ~~there~~ through
the shrouds of their ~~their~~ dark faith after an
unknown God. Between him and them were
seas, but God controlled winds and waves. Here

rivers, deserts, mountains, but they were but incidents
 and incitements; the means of trial and theater of
 victory to his adventurous faith; not obstacles in
 his way. Not more unconquerable was the ^{soul} ~~root~~
 of St. Francis Xavier when he took the bold
 resolve to sever himself from his native Spain
 and the opulent show of Spanish ecclesiasticism,
 and, alone, set up a Catholic standard on the
 plains of the Indes and the Ganges; then was
 that of Lee when ~~once~~ he had taken the stan-
 dard of Christian and civil empire at once, and
 planted it, in array of war, on against the gates
 of heathen empire. He felt the strings of that
 philosophy too deep for most souls are to feel; that he
 who lives and works for God and Eternity; lives
 and works best for himself and time, and gains
 that for which ^{he} does and does not strive alike;
 while he who lives and works for self and time
 loses all he gains of that for which he toils, and
 gains beyond, a dreadful, and ~~and~~ eternal loss. This
 filled and fired him. He thundered the sum-
 mons of God at the quaking gates. Poor, lone
 man, weak and wrong with ~~the~~ rather toil;

what, to all this great Empire of death is the
 owner of thy cell. Of thy cell, nothing. Of Gods
 by thee all that from 1834 through all the
 years that have been, that are to be, has bloom-
 ed and burgeoned, ^{with brightness and bloom,} in Church and empire,
^{under} ~~in~~ the very dawn or noo-day splendors of the
 Pacific skies. This was the prophecy of his soul.

Stobly, as splendidly, is it being fulfilled
 But let us stay the excited course of the pen,
 which moves ⁱⁿ but too willingly obedience to the
 impulse of the heart, from the grand prophetic
 beginning to the grand conclusion. Its words
 must be staid, sobered, for these needs are histor-
 ic. But well to understand the history, the field
 that history has tracked must be clearly limned
 before the mental vision. Not in distances, in
 miles and leagues; but in character, in qual-
 ity, in relations. ~~See it. Behold it.~~

When furor Lee stood in the eastern gate of
 Oregon in midsummer of 1834, Oregon was ^{to} history
 and science a shadow, a myth. The few who
 had traversed its plains and mountains, had,
 by their descriptions, mustered them more with the

impossible colorings which marked the words of the old Spanish explorers, than with the sober actualities of rock and earth. Even the missionary himself knew little of the world he had entered. To him it was the venture of faith: a trust in the guidance of providence. As to plan and place of work he had literally none. The whole land was before him but he did not know the land.

Oregon was then considered as extending from the rocky mountains westward to the Pacific ocean, and from the forty second parallel northward to the Russian possessions, and the two greatest nations of Christendom were leading the question of its ownership through the delays and stratagems of diplomacy, each anxious to gain some advantage of the other by ingrafting subjects with soil, and thus make the rights of the citizen guarantee possession of the land. By the treacherous transfer of Astoria, by the false hunted pretenses of the North West Company in 18 the crop of St Louis had been planted south of the mouth of the Columbia

river, while a hundred miles higher up, the
 most eligible and beautiful location on the
 river had passed into the occupancy of the
 Hudson Bay Company, and become the head
 quarters of all this immense traffic, and the
 residence of their governors and chiefs. The en-
 terprise of Mr. Lee had little to do, in its purpo-
 ses, with the settlement of any of these diplomat-
 ic controversies. It was simply and only to save last
 men. It was in answer to the cry of a dying ^{heathen} people
 for a knowledge of the true God. He was no states-
 man; that is, he had not made the policies of
 state his study. But he ^{had} taken some of the deep
 lessons of Statesmanship; lessons of Gods Government
 and Providence; but it can scarcely be imagined
 that he realized the true and final diplomatic
 effect of his sublime act, when he, an American
 citizen, bore the unfurled banner of the cross through
 the gates of the Rocky mountains, down the plains
 of the Columbia, and finally erected it where it
 has stood to this day, in the very Eden of Oregon.
 As I have said he came to a dying heathen
 people. Among them, at every point west of the

Rocky mountains he was permitted to enter, by the terms of governmental permit; while his commission from the church was a carte blanche.

Through many ~~tribes~~ great and powerful tribes, he pursued on his westward way, tribes dwelling amid scenes of vast surpassing loveliness. The Mr Percus and Haynes who swarmed through the green valleys of the Blue Mountains, and over the beautiful plains to the west and north were the cavaliers, the red chivalry of the Tribes. It is supposed yet unascertained, were the ground where Dr Whitman first subsequently established his mission, the story of which is elsewhere given in this work, seeking a position nearer the sea. Not until he had come to the tidal level of the lower Columbia, did he feel that his journey was ended, and he had found the ground where he could plant his banner.

When he reached Vancouver, the head quarters of the Hudson's Bay Company, he found it in charge of a stalwart, able, broad minded Scotchman; Dr John McLaughlin. Like all the rest of the leaders of that company, Dr

Mr Saugher was a thorough Briton, and we
 can well suppose that something of a shade of
 regret passed over his countenance as he took
 the American missionary by the hand, and gave
 him by word a welcome that was not altogether
 in his heart. But the comets of the wilderness
 demanded some show of hospitality, regretful though
 it might be, and it was extended. Still the
 mind of Mr Saugher, which had a statis-
 marlike reach, took in some of the probable results
 of the invasion of this empire of heathenism
 by evangel steps. A thousand priests and oblates
 might come and go; set up the monuments of
 of popery among those of heathenism, and it boded
 no interruption of their dominion, but a single evan-
 gelical missionary, with an open Bible, and bearing
 in his own body the chartered and sacred rights
 of American citizenship, was an omen which he
 was too far and clear sighted not to discern.
 He knew that it meant ^{to his dark land} what ~~the~~ means the morning
 star to the night; an end of its night and darkness.

It had already become tolerably
 apparent to the intelligent gentlemen connected

with the Hudsons Bay Company, that the course of events would at length assign that part of Oregon South of the Columbia river to the United States, but they cherished a strong hope that the country that embraces Puget Sound - the Mediterranean of America, would be held by Great Britain. Accordingly Mr Lee was advised to proceed to the valley of the Willamette, which strikes the Columbia perpendicularly from the South, opposite Vancouver, and establish his mission among its Tribes. This advice, coinciding with his own judgment as ^{it} did, was followed, and when the rains of the Autumn of 1834 were falling the missionary was rearing an humble tenement of logs to shelter himself & his two colabourers in the erection of this work. The site chosen was on the eastern bank of the Willamette, in the midst of ~~one of the~~ ^a most beautiful sytran scenes, and central to the finest valley of the North Pacific. This mission became the nucleus around which rapidly gathered and consolidated the elements of protestant faith and american instincts and tendencies. In a

later day, when the requirements of the mission were expanded, and its numbers increased, it was removed to Chemeketa, and there, under the more Christian name of Salem, it founded the literary and political capital of the State of Oregon.

Thus, in rapid sentences, has been sketched the work of the real pioneer of civilization and Christianity on the Pacific coast; Jason Lee. But to just estimate of what he did, and how he suffered; a few incidents of his life; a life of such marvellous fruitfulness in good and thrilling history; will be requisite. These incidents have all enchantment of romance, but they have in addition the merit of being facts.