

The  
Washington Historical Quarterly

---

THE EVOLUTION OF A LAMENT.

About the middle of the month of September, 1831, there was erected one day on the first bench or level of the bank of the Mississippi river near the northerly limits of the city of St. Louis, an Indian lodge of skins spread over poles—a large lodge, according to one who saw it and has written about it—by at least four Indians who had journeyed upon their Indian horses and with their pack animals from the rendezvous at Green River, in company with a returning trader, probably assisting in bringing in his furs. It was a very common thing for Indians to visit St. Louis in those days, for various reasons, one of which was that General William Clark, the Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the West, had his headquarters and resided there. These particular Indians, however, had not come from any usual cause, nor were they from any of the prairie tribes. They were from beyond the summit of the Rocky Mountains, where General Clark had traveled twenty-five years before, and they came by reason of religious impulse, having been sent to ascertain how the white people communed with the Great Spirit, and whether religious teachers could not be sent to live in their country and instruct them. Very naturally they were at once taken by the trader to General Clark, who became very much interested in them, and did all that he could to ascertain their wishes and to assist them; but their language was such that they could not be well understood. They seem to have indicated a preference for the Roman Catholic form of worship; two of them died and were buried by the priests in the cemetery of the Cathedral of St. Louis. Soon after this the remaining two, with the assurance of General Clark and others that teachers would be sent to their tribe, seem to have left St. Louis and to have spent the winter at some other place; for in the spring they joined the party ascending the Missouri River

by steamboat, George Catlin, the painter of Indian portraits, being in the same company. One of them died on the way home, the other lived to reach his tribe in safety. The authorities for these statements and further details are to follow. That the publication in 1833 of the fact that such a deputation had visited St. Louis and for such a purpose started the missionary movement toward the Oregon country several years earlier than otherwise would have taken place is quite certain. But so much historic achievement has been claimed as resulting from this incident, and so much of glamor gathered about it, that a brief examination of it *ad seriatim* will be of interest. For the present purpose it will be assumed that the deputation arrived at St. Louis in the early fall of 1831, though later verification may establish the year 1830 as the correct one.

We will first get a glimpse of conditions in 1831 at St. Louis, the chief city west of the Mississippi at that time. No census is available for that year, but in 1828 there had been a census showing a population of a trifle over five thousand; and the next census following, that of 1836, showed more than double that number. From this and other sources of information we may reasonably state that there were at least six thousand people in the city in 1831. It was the headquarters of the fur trade and the trade center of the whole Southwest and Western country beyond the Mississippi River. Of Protestant churches the Presbyterian was organized in 1817 by Rev. Samuel Giddings, the Baptist in 1818, the Episcopal (Christ Church) in 1819 and the Methodist Episcopal in 1820. General Clark was one of the organizers of and a pew holder in Christ Church. Clergymen prominent in the Missouri Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church resided in St. Louis, and the annual conference meeting of that denomination was held in that city in September of the year 1830 and perhaps also in 1831. So that while it may be said—speaking of sects—that St. Louis had been from the first a Catholic city in point of numbers, in 1831 there were at least four Protestant denominations active there as organizations, and the Methodist Episcopal Church especially so as regards work throughout the State of Missouri.

General Clark was at that time over sixty years of age, a man of strict integrity and untarnished morals, and held in high respect in the city. He was a man of family; his wife died in December of that year. He was a charter member of the St. Louis Lodge No. 3, A. F. & A. M., and afterward of Missouri Lodge No. 12, and hence could not have been a Roman Catholic.

(For the most of the above facts the writer is indebted to the courtesy of Hon. W. B. Douglas, of the Missouri Historical Society.)

Let us now take up the contemporaneous written accounts of the visit of this deputation of Indians commonly designated as Flatheads, but really from both the Nez Perces (Choppunish) and Flathead (Salishan) tribes. In 1841 there were published the two volumes entitled "Letters and Notes on the Manners, Customs and Conditions of the North American Indians, Written During Eight Years' Travel Among the Wildest Tribes of Indians in North America in 1832, '33, '34, '35, '36, '37, '38 and '39," containing numbered letters and illustrative plates, by George Catlin. Letter No. 48, in volume II., refers to these Indians, and from that we will copy and designate the quotation as

#### Catlin's Account.

Mr. Catlin refers to two **young** men "who were part of a delegation that came across the Rocky Mountains to St. Louis a few years since to inquire for the truth of a representation which they said some white men had made amongst them 'that our religion was better than theirs, and that they would all be lost if they did not embrace it.' Two old and venerable men of this party died in St. Louis, and I traveled 2,000 miles (companion of these two young fellows) toward their own country, and became much pleased with their manners and dispositions. The last mentioned of the two died near the mouth of the Yellowstone River on his way home, with disease which he had contracted in the civilized district, and the other one I have since learned arrived safely among his friends, conveying to them the melancholy intelligence of the deaths of all the rest of the party; but assurances at the same time from General Clark and many reverend gentlemen that the report which they had heard was well founded; and that missionaries—good and religious men—would soon come amongst them to teach this religion, so that they could all understand and have the benefits of it. When I first heard the report of the object of this extraordinary mission across the mountains I could scarcely believe it, but on conversing with General Clark on a future occasion I was fully convinced of the fact." This letter, from internal evidence, was written some time after the year 1837. A portion of it is quoted in Rev. William Barrows' "Oregon: The Struggle for Possession," and in several later books that were evidently based on Barrows, but only so much as suited the purpose of

those authors. By many others who refer to George Catlin as authority this letter is not quoted at all. It is from these "Letters" that we know the year of the first journey of Catlin up the Missouri by steamboat, namely, 1832, which date many writers have misstated, carelessly or to conform to the balance of their story.

Some years ago the writer first found an extended account of all the four deputations sent by the Flathead tribe to St. Louis in the '30s in a book written by L. B. Palladino, S. J., entitled "Indian and White in the Northwest," etc., (pp. 11 and 12) and published in 1894, including the earliest contemporary account of this first deputation of 1831. Father Palladino is, we are told, still living in Spokane, Washington; he was one of the early Catholic missionaries in what is now Montana. But recently there has been afforded an opportunity to read the later book of the late William I. Marshall, of Chicago, that untiring digger after facts, and this same account is given at page 5 et seq. of part II. of his "Acquisition of Oregon," etc., and from that, with permission, we will quote what for convenience we will designate

#### The Catholic Account.

"The first mention that has ever been found of these four Flatheads is in a letter dated Dec. 31, 1831, from Rt. Rev. Joseph Rosati, Bishop of St. Louis, to the editor of the 'Annales de l'Association de la Propagation de la Foi,' of Lyons, France, and printed in that publication in 1832 (V. 599, 600). A translation of so much of it as concerns this subject is on pp. 188-9 of Vol. II., of 'Records of the Am. Cath. Hist. Society,' of Philadelphia, in an article on 'The Origin of the Flathead Mission,' by Major Edmond Mallet, LL. B., as follows: 'Some three months ago four Indians, who live at the other side of the Rocky Mountains, near the Columbia River, arrived in St. Louis. After visiting General Clark who, in his celebrated travels, had seen the nation to which they belong, and had been well received by them, they came to see our church, and appeared to be exceedingly well pleased with it. Unfortunately there was no one who understood their language. Sometime afterward two of them fell dangerously ill. I was then absent from St. Louis. Two of our priests visited them, and the poor Indians seemed delighted with their visit. They made signs of the Cross and other signs which appeared to have some relation to baptism. This sacrament was administered to them; they gave expression of their satisfaction. A little cross was presented to them; they took it with eagerness, kissed it repeatedly, and it could be taken from them only after their death. It was truly distressing that they could not be spoken to. Their remains were

carried to the church for the funeral, which was conducted with all the Catholic ceremonies. The other two attended and acted with great propriety. They have returned to their country.

“We have since learned from a Canadian, who has crossed the country which they inhabit, that they belong to the nation of Tetes-Plates (Flatheads), which, as with another called the Pieds-Noirs (or Blackfeet) have received some notions of the Catholic religion from two Indians who had been to Canada, and who had related what they had seen, giving a striking description of the beautiful ceremonies of the Catholic worship, and telling them that it was also the religion of the whites; they have retained what they could of it, and they have learned to make the sign of the Cross and to pray. These nations have not yet been corrupted by intercourse with others; their manners and customs are simple and they are very numerous. We have conceived the liveliest desire to not let pass such a good occasion. Mr. Condamine has offered himself to go to them next spring with another. In the meantime, we shall obtain information on what we have been told, and on the means of travel.’ \* \* \*

“The register of burials of the cathedral at St. Louis states that one of these Indians—Narcisse—was buried Oct. 31st, 1831, Rev. Edmond Saulnier officiating, and the second—Paul—was buried on Nov. 17th, 1831, Rev. Benedict Roux officiating. (Records Am. Catholic History Soc., Vol. II., p. 190.)”

In the year of 1835, Dr. Marcus Whitman went as far West as the rendezvous at Green River and visited St. Louis, both going and coming, and a journal of that trip is preserved in the form of a letter to the missionary board at Boston, which is on file among the papers of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions. The report of Dr. Whitman as to those Indians, as given on pages 10 and 11 of this same book by Principal Marshall, is as follows:

#### Dr. Whitman's Account.

“A letter written by Dr. Whitman, really a journal covering May 14th to Dec. 17th, 1835, and covering 16 pp. foolscap,—from which nothing has yet been published,—(but which I copied from the original) says: ‘The following is the history of these Indians that came to St. Louis to gain a knowledge of the Christian religion as I received it from the trader under whose protection they came and returned. He says their object was to gain religious knowledge. For this purpose the Flathead tribe delegated one of their principal chiefs, and two of their principal men, and the Nez Perce tribe a like delegation, it being a joint delegation of both tribes. In addition to this delegation a young Nez Perce came along. When they came to Council Bluffs two of the Flatheads and one of the Nez Percés returned

home, and the other Flathead, the chief, and the Nez Perce chief, and the remaining one of the delegation, and the young Indian came to St. Louis, where they remained through the winter. At St. Louis two of them died and the only remaining one of the delegation died on his return at the mouth of the Yellowstone, so that there was no one left to return but the young man."

(There is not a word in this about their "having come in search of the white man's Bible" or anything whatever about the Bible, or about **any book**.)

In 1831 the Wyandotte tribe of Indians was living upon a reservation near Sandusky, in Ohio, but a proposal had been made to remove them to a larger tract in the West, and a number of the tribe were sent to explore that country before their decision should be made. Mr. William Walker, an intelligent man, of either part or full Wyandotte blood, was the interpreter of those who made this journey, and the party on their outward trip seem to have passed through St. Louis early in November, 1831, at a date after the death of the first Indian and before that of the second. After his return, Mr. Walker wrote a letter to his friend, Mr. G. P. Disoway, of Pittsburg, and that gentleman made it a part of a lengthy communication to the "Christian Advocate and Journal and Zion's Herald" (the leading publication of the M. E. Church) of March 1st, 1833. This was, so far as is known, the first publication in America of anything in reference to the Flathead-Nez Perces deputation and it made an immediate impression in religious circles. The communication has been reproduced in full in so many books that are easy of access (see Exhibit "D" in Chittenden's History of the Fur Trade for the best; also, Mowry's Marcus Whitman,) that it is unnecessary to repeat it here. Suffice to say that in no part of it or in any of the editorials based upon it at that time was there any mention of a lament by one of the Indians or of the "Book of Heaven" as a phrase. We will, however, set forth so much of William Walker's letter as relates to this deputation, calling it

#### The Methodist Account.

Upper Sandusky, Jan. 19th, 1833.

Dear Friend:—Your last letter, dated November 12th, came duly to hand. The business part is answered in another communication which is inclosed.

I deeply regret that I have had no opportunity of answering your very friendly letter in a manner that would be satisfactory

to myself; neither can I now, owing to a want of time and a retired place, where I can write undisturbed. \* \* \*

I will here relate an anecdote, if I may so call it. Immediately after we landed in St. Louis, on our way to the West, I proceeded to General Clark's, Superintendent of Indian Affairs, to present our letters of introduction from the Secretary of War, and to receive the same from him to the different Indian agents in the upper country. While in his office and transacting business with him, he informed me that three chiefs from the Flathead nation were in his house, and were quite sick, and that one (the fourth) had died a few days ago. They were from the west of the Rocky Mountains. (Here is given a description of their flattened heads and the manner of doing it.)

The distance they had traveled on foot was nearly three thousand miles to see General Clark, their great father, as they called him, he being the first American officer they ever became acquainted with, and having much confidence in him, they had come to consult him, as they said, upon very important matters. General Clark related to me the object of their mission, and, my dear friend, it is impossible for me to describe to you my feelings while listening to his narrative. I will here relate it briefly as I well can: It appeared that some white man had penetrated into their country, and happened to be a spectator at one of their religious ceremonies, which they scrupulously perform at stated periods. He informed them that their mode of worshipping the Supreme Being was radically wrong, and instead of being acceptable and pleasing, it was displeasing to Him; he also informed them that the white people away toward the rising of the sun had been put in possession of the true mode of worshipping the Great Spirit. They had a book containing directions how to conduct themselves in order to enjoy His favor and hold converse with Him; and with this guide, no one need go astray; but every one that would follow the directions laid down there could enjoy, in this life, His favor, and after death would be received into the country where the Great Spirit resides, and live forever with Him.

Upon receiving this information, they called a national council to take this subject into consideration. Some said, if this be true, it is certainly high time we were put in possession of this mode, and if our mode of worshipping be wrong and displeasing to the Great Spirit it is time we had laid it aside. We must know something about this—it is a matter that cannot be put off—the sooner we know it the better. They accordingly deputed four of the chiefs to proceed to St. Louis to see their great father, General Clark, to inquire of him, having no doubt but he would tell them the whole truth about it.

They arrived at St. Louis and presented themselves to General Clark. The latter was somewhat puzzled, being sensible of the responsibility that rested on him; he, however, proceeded by informing them that what they had been told by the white man in their own country was true. Then he went into a suc-

cinct history of man, from his creation down to the advent of the Savior; explained to them all the moral precepts contained in the Bible, expounded to them the decalogue; informed them of the advent of the Savior, his life, precepts, his death, resurrection, ascension, and the relation he now stands to man as a mediator—that he will judge the world, etc.

Poor fellows, they were not all permitted to return home to their people with the intelligence. Two died in St. Louis, and the remaining two, though somewhat indisposed, set out for their native land. Whether they reached home or not is not known. The change of climate and diet operated very severely upon their health. Their diet when at home is chiefly vegetables and fish.

If they died on their way home, peace be to their names! They died inquirers after the truth. I was informed that the Flatheads, as a nation, have the fewest vices of any tribe of Indians on the continent of America.

I had just concluded I would lay this rough and uncouth scroll aside and revise it before I would send it, but if I lay it aside you will never receive it; so I will send it to you just as it is "with all its imperfections," hoping that you may be able to decipher it. You are at liberty to make what use you please of it.

Yours in haste,

WM. WALKER.

G. P. Disoway, Esq.

This is the story as told in 1833, more than a year after the occurrence. But in the spring of the following year (1834), Rev. D. Lee and Rev. Jason Lee were in St. Louis and made inquiries of General Clark (they were on their way to Oregon to start the Methodist mission), and in Lee's "Ten Years in Oregon," (Lee & Frost, N. Y., 1844) pp. 110-11, we read that they ascertained that the account printed in the "Advocate" was "high wrought" and contained "incorrect statements." So there is good ground for believing that there had been much embellishment even at that early date. We know that the description of the flattened heads is largely imaginative, because nearly every traveler reported that this custom did not prevail among either the Choppunish or Salishan tribes.

Among the manuscripts in the Bancroft collection at the University of California is one written by a retired clergyman of the Methodist Episcopal Church, whose father had been a resident of old St. Louis and who says he was himself ordained as an elder in that denomination at a meeting held in St. Louis about the time the Flathead-Nez Perces deputation arrived there; and it is upon the authority of that manuscript that the foregoing statement is made as to the Indians setting up their own



lodge and living in it while they stayed at St. Louis. As special permission has been obtained by the writer to make a copy of that manuscript it will be presented as a document at a later date, with verifications and comments, and not considered here. This account also refers to the Walker letter as overdrawn and incorrect.

The incident we are discussing took place in 1831-32, and the chronicles we have transcribed were written within a decade thereafter. But we now pass on to the year 1866 before we note another development of this tale. In the meantime, the Indian missions in Oregon (Methodist, Congregational-Presbyterian and Catholic) had been started with enthusiasm, maintained at much cost and sacrifice, and, in most instances, ceased to exist. Those among the Flatheads and the Nez Perces were afterward revived, and in time yielded some results; they were the most promising. During the intervening years there may have been further mention of this deputation in public address or missionary literature, but none that has attracted any attention or that has been quoted by any historical writer. But the issue of February 16th, 1866, of the Walla Walla Statesman contains No. 2 of a series of lectures written by one of the early missionaries, Rev. H. H. Spalding, entitled "Early Oregon Missions and Their Importance in Securing the Country to Americans," and here we find further elaboration.

Mr. C. B. Bagley, of Seattle, has kindly furnished the following copy from his files of the paper:

#### **The Spalding Account.**

"Mark the hand of God bringing forward His agents. In 1832 the Flathead and Nez Perces Indians, having received some ideas of God from gentlemen of the Hudson Bay Company, and having committed five of their young men to that company to be by them taken across the Rocky Mountains and committed to the school of those self-devoted excellent men, Messrs. Jones and Cochran, of the Church Missionary Society at the Selkirk Settlement of the Lakes, still felt, as they expressed it, 'very hungry for more of God's Book,' and resolved to send men to the rising sun to obtain that book, and men to teach it. They seemed to have been encouraged in this, also, by Catholic Iroquois Indians from Canada, a few of whom had arrived among them. This delegation consisted of one principal chief, one sub-chief and two warriors. They arrived at the American rendezvous on Green River in time to join the American Fur Company on their return from the Rocky Mountains to the States. They paid their passage (riding their own horses) by herding

animals, hunting, swimming rivers and otherwise making themselves useful. At St. Louis General Clark, then Superintendent of Indian Affairs, for the Western Territories, received them kindly, having met their chief in his own country twenty-six years before. Two of them died during the winter. In the spring, as the other two were about to return to their nations, the chief made his last lament to General Clark: 'I came to you, the Great Father of the white men, with but one eye partly opened. I am to return to my people beyond the mountains of snow, at the setting sun, with both eyes in darkness and both arms broken. I came for teachers and am going back without them. I came to you for the Book of God. You have not led me to it. You have taken me to your big house where multitudes of your children assemble and where your young women dance as we do not allow our women to dance, and you have taken me to many other big houses where the people bow down to each other and light torches to worship pictures. The Book of God was not there. And I am to return to my people to die in darkness.' This lament was overheard in an adjoining room by a young man of the Methodist Church, who immediately made known the fact that the Indians had come beyond the Rocky Mountains to obtain missionaries in a letter to a brother in Christ in Pittsburgh. But just as the fact was about to come before the public, it came under the eye of the great Indian traveler, George Catlin, who, providentially, was in that city at the time. He advised not to publish the statement. He did not believe it to be true, as he had traveled from the Rocky Mountains in the same caravans with those Indians; had seen them often in General Clark's office during the winter; he had never understood that they came for that purpose, but he would write to General Clark. He did so, and soon received the frank acknowledgment of General Clark: 'The sole object of those Indians when visiting the States was to obtain religious teachers.' Mr. Catlin immediately gave the facts to the editor, told him to give it to the world. I received this from Mr. Catlin's own lips, when we met him in Pittsburgh on our way to this country, in March of 1836. **The lament I received from the only surviving one of the delegation after I arrived in the nation.** The chief died soon after leaving St. Louis. Only one returned to the nation."

Concerning Mr. Spalding the writer is inclined to be charitable, out of consideration for the reported accident of his birth, the diseased condition of his mind (as stated by his associate, Dr. Marcus Whitman) aggravated by the shock and exposure connected with his personal escape from massacre; and there is no doubt that he was courageous and zealous in his early work among the Nez Percés and accomplished more in proportionate results than any other Protestant missionary in the Oregon country; his good wife is entitled to credit for this

also. But there is written evidence to his having been a very troublesome member of the mission band, of a violent temper and vengeful disposition, and of his actual hatred of the Catholics and the Hudson's Bay Company interests, which led to his general discredit by many of the people of Oregon and Washington during the '50s and '60s. He was practically a fanatic upon those very questions which are closely connected with our history, and his own writings furnish this evidence, as well as unprejudiced statements of those who lived as neighbors to him. His later missionary work among the Nez Perces was also unquestionably good, although during those same years some of the army officials were compelled to forbid his presence at their posts. Allowing him due credit as a pioneer and a missionary, his statements and conclusions must be in a very considerable part rejected as historical authority. And yet he is the authority used (innocently, perhaps, by some) by most of those writing from the missionary standpoint.

#### Spalding's Later Account.

During the fall of the year 1870 Mr. Spalding went East in the interest of missionary work and of some land claims, and, incidentally, to let the government officials know that he was on earth and willing to accept the office of Indian agent at Lapwai; for it was the plan then to take the care of the Indians away from the War Department and give it into the care of the missionary societies. In Chicago he had himself interviewed by Rev. S. J. Humphrey, an editor of the "Advance," and this interview was published on December 1st, 1870, in that denominational paper, and the following month was included as a part of a report to the Interior Department, and was published by the government as "Executive Document No. 37" of the Forty-first Congress. In this some further elaboration appears:

"The Macedonian Nez Perces.—About the council fire, in solemn conclave (it was in the year 1832), the Flatheads and Nez Perces had determined to send four of their number to 'the rising sun' for 'that Book of Heaven.' They had got word of the Bible and a Savior in some way from the Iroquois. These four dusky wise men, one of them a chief, who had thus dimly 'seen His star in the east,' made their way to St. Louis. \* \* \* They fell into the hands of General Clark. \* \* \* He was a Romanist, and took them to his church, and, to entertain them, to the theatre. How utterly he failed to meet their wants is revealed in the sad words with which they departed: 'I came to you' [and the survivor repeated the words years afterward to Mr. Spalding] 'with one eye partly opened; I go back with

both eyes closed and both arms broken. My people sent me to obtain that Book from Heaven. You took me where your women dance as we do not allow ours to dance; and the Book was not there. You took me where I saw men worship God with candles; and the Book was not there. I am now to return without it, and my people will die in darkness.' And so they took their leave. But this sad lament was overheard. A young man wrote it to his friends in Pittsburg."

Executive Document No. 37 is now quite easily to be had and the reader can see the whole of the interview there.

#### The Barrows Account.

During his visit in the East, and afterward, Mr. Spalding undoubtedly found this Indian lament very taking, and we next find it again amplified and used by Rev. William Barrows in his series of articles contributed to the *New York Observer* and afterward compiled into his "Oregon," (H. M. & Co., 1883) chapter XIII. of which gives a more detailed version of this Flathead deputation and the lament as follows:

"I came to you over the 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 me—the braves of many winters and wars—we leave asleep here by your great water. They were tired in many moons and their moccasins wore out. My people sent me to get the white man's Book from Heaven. You took me where you allow your women to dance as we do not ours, and the Book was not there. You took me where they worship the Great Spirit with candles, and 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. I am going back the long, sad trail to my people in 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 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."

Mr. Barrows boldly includes this within quotation marks, but gives no clue as to where he found it. There is no positive

proof, but scarcely a doubt, that he took it from one of the missionary addresses delivered by Mr. Spalding while on that trip. Barrows' "Oregon" can hardly be called a history, but it was published for many years in the "Commonwealth Series" and considered as such; it has now been displaced.

#### The Mowry Account.

After the publication of his "Oregon," the tale and the form of the lament as given by Barrows appear in various writings, especially eulogies of Dr. Whitman, (by Nixon, Eells, Mrs. Dye and others) but we pass on to what is considered in religious circles an authoritative book upon its subject, namely, "Marcus Whitman and the Early Days of Oregon," by W. A. Mowry, Ph. D. (S. B. & C., 1901.) The preface to this book states that it is the result of over twenty years of careful investigation of everything the author could lay his hands upon relating to the subject; that the "book is a history, not an embellished story; written with the single purpose of stating in a clear and concise manner the important facts with which it has to deal. From first to last it has to do with facts." Read now his chapter on "Early Missions," pp. 35-49, and see with what regard for the contemporary accounts and devotion to the truth this Indian deputation incident has been treated. Principal Marshall says ("Acquisition of Oregon," p. 27):

"But not till Mowry's 'Marcus Whitman' appeared did any author venture to assert that it had been 'circulated' before the Statesman and Advance articles in 1866 and 1870, or that anyone ever claimed to have reduced it to writing prior to that time, but Mowry says (p. 46): 'One of the clerks in General Clark's office took down, at the moment, the speech of the Indian as it was interpreted to General Clark, and it began to be circulated.' For this he offers no authority, and, undoubtedly no authority can be produced for it save Dr. Mowry's desire to have it so. If it began to be 'circulated' in the early spring of 1832, pray how did it happen that with all the excitement and discussion there was about this matter, in no letter, or diary, or book, or magazine, or newspaper article has so much as one sentence of this speech been found till 34 years afterwards, when parts of it appeared in the Chicago Advance, in an 'interview' with Rev. H. H. Spalding? It may be stated further that Mr. Mowry has been privately asked to designate some early publication of this lament and has been unable to do so. With one statement of the preface the chapter seems in full accord, namely: 'This book was like 'Topsey'—it was not born, it grew.'"

But the end is not yet. At a public meeting held on the evening of November 29th, 1907, at Walla Walla in celebration

of the sixty-first anniversary of the Whitman Massacre (at which the patriotic claim for the mission was made especially emphatic) the "historical address" of the program was written and delivered by Mr. Edwin Eells, a son of the early missionary, Cushing Eells, and a brother of the late Myron Eells, who was a voluminous writer upon pioneer missionary history and considered in some circles as a reliable authority upon general Pacific Northwest history as well. This romantic address is printed in full in Vol. 2, No. 2 of the Washington Historical Quarterly, and this Indian lament, as given by Barrows and by W. A. Mowry, serves as an impressive opening paragraph, rendered doubly so by the dramatic statement immediately following it: "These were the words that saved Old Oregon and the Pacific Northwest to the government of the United States." From Mr. Eells, also, we learn that the lament was at once published in the East "with ringing editorials." When asked to cite an authority he was of course unable to do so.

It has become evident, then, that good and benevolent men, and some even with a reputation as historians, have imagined things, and among others these: That General Clark was a Romanist; that he was well versed in homeletics and could explain a whole system of theology to Indians by means of signs and interpreters, but too bigoted to assist them to get a copy of the Bible or teachers; that the Indians could not get a Bible or spiritual teachers anywhere in that city of six thousand or more people and at least four Protestant churches engaged in active work; that the older Indian, the chief, who had seen General Clark twenty-five years before, then delivered a pathetic lament which **MUST** have been immediately printed and circulated because the younger Indian, the only one who reached his tribe again, repeated the words of it to the missionary Spalding some eight or ten years afterward when Spalding had become able to understand their dialect, and Spalding remembered it and set it down in writing nearly thirty years afterward; that in consequence the missionary movement was at once set in motion toward the Oregon country (would not have been started at all perhaps without it), and Oregon saved to the United States.

In the historical garden of the Pacific Northwest, in the course of years, these rootless flowers will die out and there will yet remain strength and beauty in abundance.

C. T. JOHNSON.