

DOCUMENTS ILLUSTRATING THE BEGINNINGS OF
THE PRESBYTERIAN ADVANCE INTO
THE OREGON COUNTRY

(Continued from April issue)

To stress unduly the motives of sectarian zeal and of fear and hatred of Roman Catholicism, however, would be to misunderstand the spirit of the modern missionary movement. More important than these was the motive of brotherly love, of which the desire of Christians of every denomination to extend aid to men and women of their own kind whom they saw passing beyond the confines of the "preached gospel" was but a single expression. Here, doubtless, was the mainspring of the whole modern missionary movement. Long experience had taught the churches in the older communities of America that ministers of the gospel could not be supported by the unaided efforts of pioneers in the first days of a frontier settlement. If it were proper to send missionaries to foreign lands, surely it was right to send bearers of the gospel to fellow countrymen on the borders of the home land. Then, too, on the frontier were Indians who were without the blessings of the gospel. The ultimate aim of the modern missionary movement, of which the home missionary enterprise was but a part, was the conversion of the world.

Agencies of conversion as well as motives for evangelization are mentioned in these documents. A gospel ministry, Christian educational institutions, and an evangelical literature were considered indispensable. In emphasizing such agencies, the Presbyterians were not different from other Protestant groups.

Finally, the subjoined documents may be consulted with profit by persons interested in non-religious aspects of the colonization of Oregon. They tell of different routes and of differing conditions of travel; they disclose efforts made to organize migrating groups of common faiths; and they reveal the fact that more than one missionary letter from Oregon was an effective advertisement of Oregon's resources. Letters praising Oregon were widely disseminated in religious periodicals of the mid-nineteenth century and doubtless did much to arouse interest in the settlement of that territory.

In the work of collecting and editing these documents I have received assistance from Miss Nellie B. Pipes, editor of the *Oregon*

Historical Quarterly; from Miss Eliza J. Martin, librarian at Bucknell University; and from Miss Margaret Jackson, head librarian of the Hoyt Library, Kingston, Pennsylvania.

I.

The Associate Reformed and the Associate Presbyterian Churches

A.

MISSIONS TO OREGON AND CALIFORNIA.¹⁵ Since the conclusion of peace with Mexico, these newly acquired territories are rapidly exciting a deep interest in the public mind. Multitudes are emigrating to them. And it is gratifying to notice that Christianity is not slow in its efforts on their behalf. Missions have been established for some time in Oregon. The A.[ssociate] R.[eformed] Synod of the West has a mission family (Rev. W.[ilson] Blain), already bearing the gospel thither. And the American Home Missionary Society sent out on the 23d of November, the Rev. Horace Lyman and lady, as a re-enforcement to their operations already commenced. Nor is there less interest in California. On the 1st ult., Rev. J. W. Douglass and Rev. S. H. Willey, New-School Presbyterians; Rev. S. Woodbridge, Jun., of the Old-School; and Rev. O. C. Wheeler, of the Baptist Church, sailed in the ship Falcon, from New York, for this important field.

B.

OREGON TERRITORY¹⁶

We present our readers with the following items of intelligence, which we take from the last number of the United Presbyterian, respecting the territory of Oregon. It is desirable, as our Church has it in contemplation to establish a mission in this part of the world, that all the information attainable should be in possession of her members. Mr. Blain¹⁷ is a missionary from the Associate Ref. Synod of the West.—ED.

¹⁵ *The Christian Instructor* (January 1849), n. s., V, 92.

¹⁶ *The Evangelical Repository* (October, 1849), VIII, 251.

¹⁷ Wilson Blain, a pioneer minister, legislator, teacher, and editor of Oregon, was born in Ross County, Ohio, February 28, 1813. After his graduation at Miami University, he completed a full course of study at the Associate Reformed Theological Seminary at Allegheny, Penna., was licensed to preach by the First Presbytery of Ohio on April 18, 1838, and was ordained by the Presbytery of Chillicothe on October 17, 1839. He founded the town of Hebron, Indiana, and had pastoral charge of the church there until May 15, 1847. In that year he was appointed missionary to Oregon by the General Associate Reformed Synod of the West. On May 8, 1848, he started on his westward journey and arrived at Oregon City on November 29, 1848. In Linn City, situated on the Willamette River directly opposite Oregon City, he established a residence and began his ministerial labors. On June 6, 1849, he was elected a member of the upper branch of the first territorial legislature of Oregon. From October 4, 1849, to September 5,

MESSRS. EDITORS: I have just received a letter from Brother Blain, and supposing there are items in his letter which would be interesting to many of our people, I hasten to give you an abstract.

Brother Blain, in speaking of his condition in Oregon, says, "It affords me pleasure to be able to address you with feelings so buoyant and contented. Indeed it would be very hard to feel that we were otherwise than happily situated. Supplied with the necessities of life, and in the enjoyment of such health as we all never knew at one time in Indiana, we are laid under great obligations of gratitude to a gracious Providence."

I had once a strong inclination to emigrate to Oregon, provided I could form a colony of sufficient strength for that purpose. I intended no other than an Associate Reformed Community. When Mr. Blain was about to set out for Oregon, I requested him to furnish me from time to time with such information as he might think important to one having the inclination to emigrate. On that subject, Mr. Blain says, "I suppose your first question will be, 'Would you advise me to come to Oregon'? I suppose it would be entirely gratuitous for me to advise any one to come. But this much I may say, I am highly pleased and gratified that a kind Providence has brought me here, and any one who feels as I do will not repent of coming."

On the condition of the country, he remarks, "The discovery of the gold mines of California has wrought a great change in the state of affairs of this country, which will retard its improvement for a few years, but will ultimately make it a wealthy and prosperous country."

Mr. Blain had been requested to make inquiry for the most favorable location for the settlement of a colony. On this subject, Mr. Blain says, "You spoke of the settlement of a colony by itself. There are several places where your plan could be executed without difficulty. The best point for your purpose is at a small bay on the Pacific shore, in the south-west corner of Oregon. This is a place that has attracted a good deal of attention latterly, and it would have been settled this year, had not the gold fever prevailed so universally in this territory. As it is, it may now remain unoccupied long enough to let your colony in. It is said to afford room for a consid-

1850, he was editor of the *Oregon Spectator*. In November, 1850, he moved to Linn County, took up a land claim near Brownsville, and founded the town of Union Point. Here he organized a church and founded an academy. In the formation of the United Presbyterian Church in Oregon he took an active part. He died on February 22, 1861. The material for this sketch was furnished by Miss Nellie B. Pipes. Cf. George H. Himes, "History of the Press of Oregon, 1839-1850," in *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* (December, 1902), III, 353-354.

erable population. And if the bay can be entered with ease by large vessels, there will be a railroad from the head of Wilamette Valley to the bay, some sixty or seventy miles, and in that event, Yacquina will become one of the most considerable places in Oregon. And it is now the most perfectly free from annoyance by the Indians." As to the matter of migrating with a colony, he adds, "I feel even more anxious to have you prosecute your enterprise than ever, if you could settle a colony, and another minister come along to settle at the county site of Lina [Linn] county, in the upper part of this valley. It would throw the entire Orthodox Presbyterian influence into our hands, I had almost said forever. It would give it such a preponderance, that I am sure if our General Synod and our people appreciate it, they would not allow it to pass unimproved. The settlement at the head of the valley is the most encouraging prospect for a congregation in the country. There are some fifteen members there."

On the productions of the country, Mr. Blain writes, "As a farming country, this cannot be easily excelled. Nearly all kinds of vegetables can be produced to great perfection. Indian corn is the only grain that is not profitably cultivated. We had one turnip which weighed twenty-two pounds. Potatoes, beets, &c., do well. I have seen beets weighing twenty to thirty pounds."

Mr. Blain promises numerous letters. We, it is hoped, will receive fuller accounts from him soon, &c.

JAMES WORTH.¹⁸

SPRINGHILL, DECATUR CO., IA.,¹⁹ August 17, 1849.

C.

ADDRESS OF THE COMMITTEE ON THE MISSION TO OUR WESTERN COAST²⁰

DEAR BRETHREN: At the late meeting of our Synod,²¹ some action was proposed in reference to sending missionaries to the Pacific coast, on the far western boundary of our own country. The Synod did not deem it practicable, under our present limited information, to take final action on this proposition at present. Hence, the undersigned were appointed a committee to address the church on the sub-

¹⁸ The Reverend James Worth, a minister of the Associate Reformed Church, subsequently migrated to Oregon. He was present at the formation of the United Presbytery of Oregon and was chosen its first moderator. *The Evangelical Repository* (February, 1853), XI, 452.

¹⁹ "Ia." stands for Indiana, not Iowa.

²⁰ *The Evangelical Repository* (January, 1850). VIII, 357-360.

²¹ The Associate Synod of North America.

ject, to ascertain, as far as possible, who, both among ministers and people of our church, were willing to go to that field, and also the disposition of the church to sustain such a mission. As this duty has been too long postponed, we will now endeavour to discharge the first part of it, with as much brevity as possible; occasion probably, requiring us to communicate with you again. Being a portion of our own country, to which some of our members have already migrated, it seems, even in this respect, to have peculiar claims on our church as a missionary field. If foreign fields are admitted to have strong claims upon us for missionary labour, surely our own children have a right to ask bread at our hands—and that, too, notwithstanding their great distance from us. But when, in addition to this, we consider the growing importance of the western coast in an agricultural and commercial point of view, this claim is greatly enhanced. There can be no reasonable doubt, that in a comparatively short period of time both Oregon and California will teem with a dense population, and the Pacific seaboard on the west rival the Atlantic on the east. Our past experience teaches us how much easier it is to build our church with the growth of the country, than to do so after the population has become dense and fixed in its religious sentiments.

The labour now expended in Oregon would, under the Divine blessing, render our church there an efficient instrument for great good, and by continuing to spread and throw abroad its influences, increase with the increase of population in that extended territory, might a few years hence be expended to little profit or success in even the *establishment* of our church there. That field more nearly resembles our Western States than any foreign field, and hence our experience in the former for a few years past enables us to judge with some probable accuracy of our prospects in Oregon or California; and we do know that many a nucleus for flourishing congregations in the west has been lost to *us* by our inability or neglect to occupy in a seasonable hour. Shall this experience be lost upon us, and instead of bearing the precious seed even to the Pacific, that we may gather back our sheaves *rejoicing*, still continue inactive and unconcerned until we are again called to scan the consequences of our neglect in the blighted hopes of our church, and the spiritual desolation of souls forgotten, and *mourn*? Such mourning comes too late, unless it arouses to action and sets a church to redeeming her time. The great distance to these western territories ought to be no barrier in *our* way, so long as it is no barrier to emigration.

Thousands have already gone, and thousands more will go—and shall we make no effort to use them for the carrying of the gospel and church of the living God, whilst we *expect* them to carry with them *civilization* and the blessings of *civil* liberty?

Consider also that this presents the most favourable prospect for reaching and influencing the many tribes of Indians occupying the far west. And we ought not, in selfish love for our immediate brethren, overlook others who may not have held a common profession with us—nor in both these, forget the claim of the red man, greatly enhanced, as it is, by his wrongs. It may be that the settlement of Oregon and California, and the building of the church there, is designed of God to stay our injustice to the Indian race, by, on the one hand, leaving us no other wilderness to which we can drive them—and, on the other, so cultivating them as to entirely take away all desire for their removal: and thus, in the end, make our wrath against this people turn to God's glory, and the salvation of their souls. Many of them are now *accessible* to the missionary, and the prospect of permanent good to them is at least very favourable; and if religion could be brought to control those territories from their infancy, the prospect would be greatly enhanced. Now, as far as experience directs us, there appears one policy especially desirable in attempting what we have been recommending, namely, that our people migrating to that land should migrate and settle together, so as at once to lay the foundation of one or more congregations. We would, therefore, propose to every family or individual of our communion, intending to remove thither, to make known such intention to some member of this committee as soon as possible—stating the congregation to which they belong, and the number and ages of the members of the family—how soon they could be prepared to go—their present occupation, and what they propose to be employed in there—the amount of means they will have at their command, both for expenses by the way and for their settlement—with any other information they may think calculated to assist in making arrangements for a company to travel and settle together, not forgetting the name of their Post-Office, County, and State. And as many are preparing to remove to the Western States in the spring, we would suggest to such to take seriously into their consideration the greater amount of good they might effect by joining such a company for Oregon.

It is also the duty of the committee to collect all the informa-

tion they can, respecting this western territory, both of a religious and secular character, and lay it before Synod at its next meeting. We would now solicit communications from any person possessing accurate information, the source whence it was obtained, &c., and ask that it be communicated as speedily as possible. We will not disguise the fact that to us the Oregon territory offers more flattering hopes for the success of missionary efforts than does any part of California, yet as many may be disposed to go to the latter territory with a view to *settle permanently* there, and thus open a good field for the success of a mission from our church, we desire information concerning both fields of labour. Neither the ability of our church, nor our object in proposing this mission, will allow us to look to the gold-diggers and floating population of California for the basis of a church there; but wherever the mission is established, we must have a *permanent* population to begin with, and thus, as far as possible, extend the influence of the mission to all classes.

Now, of our ministerial brethren, who will go to this promising field of labour? Surely we may hope that the hearts of some of our brethren are moving them to say, "Here am I, send me." Should the families willing to remove there, and the willingness of the church to support this mission, give encouragement to enter upon it immediately, we would fondly hope that it may not fail through the want of willingness upon the part of our ministers to respond to this call. It is but a short time since whole classes at the Seminary expressed their willingness to go to Trinidad, if selected by Synod for that field, and now it appears as if that mission must close for want of *one* of all these brethren to respond to the many calls that have been made by the church; and if *this* call should likewise fail, what can we do but conclude that the missionary spirit is dying out of the ministry of our church?—and when a true missionary spirit begins to die, it is a certain sign of the decay of true religion in the heart, for the gospel of Christ is a missionary gospel. But we hope better things of you—and that wherever Christ calls, some, suited for the station, will be ready to go. The day is not far distant, brethren, when a large number of congregations on the Pacific will stand as monuments of the Divine approval of your labour; nor is the day distant when by railroad to St. Louis, or some point on the Missouri or Mississippi, easy and speedy communication with your brethren in the east will be at your command. And then by telegraphic wires you can hold such daily intercourse with far off friends and rela-

tions, with your brethren and with the courts of Christ's house, communicating and receiving, that, far as it is from your native place and dear friends, you will regard it as a *comparatively* small denial of self, and light cross for Christ and his gospel's sake. Those who feel inclined to undertake this mission, will please to speedily communicate with some member of this committee. And now, dear brethren who intend to remain at home, what will you give as a token of your good will to your departing friends, and for the cause of Christ in this extensive field? "The liberal soul deviseth liberal things." You have responded to other missionary calls made upon you, and we hope you will for this cause. When we find professing Christians giving with a niggardly hand, or looking long and wistfully upon their pittance before they cast it into the Lord's treasury, and yet giving liberally, yea, largely and readily, when it is to purchase lands, houses, or some *earthly* possession—they may say as they please, their conduct convicts them of warmer affections to earth than they have to heaven. It is but little the church asks of each one, when compared with what civil government asks, yea, and collects too, for its support—or what is expended by each for worldly purposes; and if all loved as they are beloved of God, when the church, *His* church, asks that little, they would cast their bread on the waters, even if they did not see as fully as they could wish the fair prospect of success. In this spirit give your mite—and may the Lord bless it abundantly to the giver, in a better recompense, as well as to the spread of his church among others.

D. H. A. M'LEAN, *Chm. of Committee.*

The Committee²² and their address is as follows:

JAMES P. MILLER, South Argyle, N. Y.

G. C. VINCENT, Mercer, Mercer Co., Pa.

D. H. A. M'LEAN, W. Greenville, do. do.

D.

December 6th, 1849.

NEEDS OF OREGON.²³ On several occasions the attention of our readers has been turned to the condition and prospects of this important section of our country. The following extract of a letter from a Clergyman in Oregon City to a lady of Boston, is worthy of

²² These men were ministers of the Associate Presbyterian Church. M'Lean and Vincent belonged to the Presbytery of Shenango and Miller to the Presbytery of Cambridge, Associate Synod of North America. In 1855 Vincent was a professor in Westminster College, New Wilmington, Penna. *The Evangelical Repository* (January, 1855), XIII, 442.

²³ *The Evangelical Repository* (March, 1850), VIII, 485.

particular notice. In urging the establishment of good female schools, he says:

"The idea of going to superior schools and teachers is very fascinating to parents and children in the West. This is the way the Papists acquire such an influence. The *Sisters of Charity* profess to teach music, French, needlework, with the common branches. They adapt themselves in every way to the people. There has been lately a nunnery established at this place. It is a few rods from my house, on the river bank. A large number of our Protestant girls are attending their schools. They have another institution up the valley twenty-five miles.²⁴ They design to build one across the river, opposite this place. A Papist who holds the claim, has given them sixty acres for their purposes. Six vessels with Roman Catholics are on their way here. One has arrived—the rest will be in soon. What have we to oppose them but schools and churches? But we have few teachers, and most of these poorly qualified. Our girls are very early married—married while they are girls, and but poorly educated in any way to be at the head of a family.^{24a} We must depend upon the East for teachers. We have money enough; we can pay teachers liberally."²⁵

E.

THE OREGON MISSION²⁶

To the Ministers and People of the Associate Church

DEAR BRETHREN: Our Synod, at its last meeting,²⁷ resolved to establish a mission Oregon; and, to carry on that mission, it was also resolved that a special fund should be established for the purpose. In order to give permanency to it, subscriptions were to be taken up for three years. The undersigned, with Messrs. Wishart²⁸ and D. H. A. M'Lean, were appointed to attend to the subscriptions and other matters preparatory to the organization of that mission.

²⁴ A summary view of the early Catholic schools in Oregon is given by Edwin V. O'Hara, *Catholic History of Oregon*, 2d ed. (Portland, Ore., 1916), pp. 92-97.

^{24a} On this subject Mrs. James P. Miller wrote from Albany, Oregon, in the autumn of 1851: "Young people, especially girls, marry so shamefully soon, that it is impossible, with their opportunities, they can be anything but ignorant. A great many are married at thirteen and some as early as eleven." *The Evangelical Repository* (January, 1852), X, 426, reprinted from *The Friend of Missions*.

²⁵ This paragraph appears to have been taken from a letter written by the Reverend George H. Atkinson, the first missionary in Oregon of the American Home Missionary Society. In a letter dated March 19, 1850, the Reverend James P. Miller quotes, with some changes of text, a part of this paragraph and ascribes the authorship thereof to Mr. Atkinson. *The Evangelical Repository* (April, 1850), VIII, 546.

²⁶ *The Evangelical Repository* (April, 1850), VIII, 545-547.

²⁷ *I. e.*, in 1849.

²⁸ The Reverend William Wishart, of the Presbytery of Muskingum, New Athens, Ohio.

It was then contemplated that there should be a return of the subscriptions by the first of January, and that the Board of Domestic Missions should be able to make the appointment of the missionaries, so that they might be ready to start with the first emigrants in the spring; it being necessary that those who taken the overland route, be ready to leave St. Joseph's, on the western limit of Missouri, as soon as the grass will afford food for the cattle.

By a letter received recently from Dr. Rodgers,²⁹ the President of the Board of Domestic Missions, it appears that very few congregations have at all attended to the matter. The reason assigned generally by the ministers for neglecting to see that the resolution of Synod was carried into effect, is, that they did not receive the subscription papers till January, the time when the money should have been ready. . . .

But I would express my deep regret if this failure should defeat so important a design of Synod, resolved upon with much deliberation and prayer; a design, too, involving the eternal interests of the souls of men, and the honour and glory of the Redeemer's kingdom. Our Redeemer said: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Our Synod took measures to comply with the command. Shall their attempted obedience be frustrated? I would indulge the hope that our people will not permit this. A few shillings, a dollar or two, at most, from even the wealthier of our people, would be sufficient to accomplish the object, if there should be anything like a general co-operation among our congregations and people. No long time or preparation is needed to contribute this amount.

All that is necessary could yet be done, if ministers and people would *now* take hold of it in earnest; let a day be appointed when a contribution shall be made. It is not essential that the sum be first subscribed on a subscription paper; if this will be necessary for subsequent years, it can be done afterwards.

Men are willing and ready to accept of the appointment and go, if only the means necessary to carry them there can be furnished; and the Board are only awaiting the funds.

Now is the proper and best time to go. The influence of *one* missionary may be of more importance *now*, than three a few years hence. Popery is making a desperate effort to engrasp the whole country. . . .³⁰

²⁹ The Reverend Dr. James Rodgers, of the Presbytery of Allegheny, Allegheny, Penna.

³⁰ A paragraph quoted from a letter from the Reverend George H. Atkinson "to a lady in Boston" is omitted. *Supra*, Note 25.

An individual of high respectability and influence from Oregon City, thus writes to the subscriber: "Send on your missionaries and teachers—encourage your people to emigrate. Come yourself—your age is nothing in the way. You may expect to *live* and labour *ten* years longer here than in the Atlantic States. We want good teachers. By all means come in the spring. Do not put it off another year. Now is the best time—you will find a people ready to welcome you. We want the basis of our population to be composed of the moral and religious. The country is remarkably healthy."

Respecting the prospects of persons making a living there, Mr. Thurston,³¹ delegate in Congress, writes: "Labouring men get from four to six dollars a day, and good mechanics from ten to sixteen dollars per day." Labouring men, mechanics, and farmers, if men of piety, besides subserving the interests of their worldly concerns there, might be greatly instrumental in building up and sustaining the Redeemer's kingdom, and in opposing the progress of the "man of sin," and benefiting by their example and influence the souls of others, and advancing generally the cause of religion, in a country which, at no very distant day, must teem with millions of immortal souls. If we believe our views of the doctrines of divine truth, and of the way of salvation, important to the eternal interests of men, and honouring to the Redeemer, why should we not, in obedience to his command, endeavour to teach them to others?

What is all the money that is necessary for that purpose in comparison to the greatness of the object? If properly distributed, fifty cents to the poorer, and a dollar or two to the wealthier, to introduce and sustain the doctrines of our holy religion in that growing community, and thus greatly extend our testimony for God's truth. Who that values his own religious privileges would feel himself the poorer by such a contribution? . . .

Yours in the bonds of the gospel,

JAMES P. MILLER.

P. S.—I have not an opportunity of submitting this to the rest of the Committee.

South Argyle, N. Y., March 19, 1850.

³¹ Samuel R. Thurston, the Congressional delegate from Oregon Territory. An "Address" by Mr. Thurston, in which the advantages of Oregon are set forth in glowing terms, was published in *The Evangelical Repository* (March, 1851), IX, 481-484.

F.

*Minutes of the Associated Synod of North America, at Their Forty-Ninth Annual Meeting, Held in the City of New York, May 21st, 1850, and Continued, by Adjournment, to the 31st.*³²

* * *

[Friday, May 24.]

The committee appointed last year on the subject of the Oregon Mission presented a report, which was laid on the table, and made the order of the day for to-morrow forenoon. . . .

[Saturday, May 25.]

. . . The report of the committee, on the contemplated mission to Oregon, was again taken up. Before taking the vote, a member was called upon to lead in prayer. The resolutions contained in the report were adopted, and the report was ordered to be printed.

Report of the Committee on the Mission to Oregon

The committee of last year, relative to the establishment of a Mission to Oregon and other parts of the Pacific, would respectfully report that, from letters received from different persons, it appears that a large number of families, say from fifty to one hundred, who are connected with the Associate Church in different places, are desirous of removing to Oregon, as early as practicable, provided Synod sends a missionary or missionaries. That a number of these wish to be on their way the ensuing autumn, as far as the Western limits of Missouri, in order to be ready for an early commencement of their journey, by the overland route, the ensuing spring. It appears, also, that there are a considerable number of persons in connexion with our church already there. It appears, also, from reports of Presbyteries and other facts, now before Synod, that there is every reason to suppose that the people of our communion are in favour of the mission, and will cordially contribute to its support. That a sufficient number of missionaries are probably now ready and willing to go on this mission. That the Protestant community in Oregon are loudly calling for help. The committee, therefore, are of opinion that all these circumstances should be regarded as a call in Providence to establish and prosecute said mission with all possible despatch.

³² *The Evangelical Repository* (July, 1850), IX, 71-93, *passim*.

Respecting the expenses necessary to carry the mission into effect, the committee are unable to report so definitely as they could wish. It may probably require from \$200 to \$300, for each person sent, to carry them by ship to their field of labour, and this route may be regarded as most expedient at present. The committee would, therefore, recommend the following: 1st. That missionaries be now appointed, and arrangements for their going to their field of labours, as soon as practicable, be made.

2d. That their salaries, with allowance for passage, be now fixed.

3d. That a Board of Trustees for that mission and its funds be appointed, to be located in the city of New York, whose duty it shall be to make arrangements for the passage of the missionaries, receive and disburse the funds, and attend to all matters necessary to carry on effectually the contemplated mission.

Respectfully submitted,

D. H. A. M'LEAN,

JAMES P. MILLER

Committee.

New York, May 24, 1850.

On motion, a committee was appointed to ascertain the amount that will be necessary for outfit and salary, and also to nominate to Synod suitable persons as missionaries, and report on Monday afternoon. Messrs. Wilson, Patterson, Galbraith, Dr. Cooper and J. S. Easton, the committee.³³

On motion, it was resolved that two missionaries be sent. . . .

[Monday, May 27.]

. . . The select committee on the Oregon mission presented a report which was accepted, and after some discussion adopted as follows:

Report of the Committee on the Oregon Mission

The committee appointed to report upon the expenses of outfit and journey to Oregon, and the salary proper to be allowed missionaries there, recommend that Synod allow such as may be appointed missionaries to Oregon for outfit and travelling expenses \$300, for

³³ The Reverend Samuel Wilson, of the Presbytery of Miami, Xenia, Ohio; the Reverend James Patterson, of the Presbytery of Muskingum, Scroggsfield, Ohio; the Reverend William Galbraith, of the Presbytery of Allegheny, Freeport, Penna.; the Reverend Dr. Joseph T. Cooper, pastor of the Second Associate Presbyterian Congregation, Philadelphia; the Reverend John S. Easton, of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, Kishacoquillas, Mifflin County, Penna.

each individual, children, member of missionary families, less in proportion to their age; and that missionaries locating in country places be allowed a salary of \$600 for the first year, in towns or cities \$700. We also recommend, that, as there may possibly be some error in the above estimate, your missionaries will be expected to study becoming economy, keep an accurate account of their expenditures there and on the way, and if the above allowances be insufficient, Synod engage to make up the deficit.

SAMUEL WILSON,
W. GALBRAITH,
JOHN S. EASTON,
JOSEPH T. COOPER.

On motion, *Resolved*, that the time when the salary shall commence be left with the Board of Trustees hereafter to be appointed, and that they be directed to pay the first year's salary in advance and afterwards semi-annually in advance.

On motion, it was ordered that the vote be taken by ballot, and the election take place on to-morrow morning at 10 o'clock. . . .

[Tuesday, May 28.]

. . . The hour having arrived, Synod proceeded to the election of missionaries to Oregon. On counting the votes, it appeared that the Rev. Messrs. James P. Miller and Joseph M'Kee, were elected.³⁴

On motion, Synod agreed to express their unanimous concurrence in the appointment.

Messrs. Lusk and French³⁵ were appointed a committee to confer with the missionaries chosen, in relation to their acceptance.

Synod then proceeded to the election of the Board of Trustees, and Messrs. Isaac M'Gay, David Duncan, and Isaac Geery, were elected.³⁶

On motion, *Resolved*, 1. That the Board of trustees of the Oregon Mission be directed to have a conference with the Board of the American Missionary Society, in regard to the support of this mission, and report to the present meeting of Synod.³⁷

34 The Reverend James P. Miller, whose name appears frequently in these documents, was the first missionary (though not the first minister) of the Associate Church in Oregon. Although somewhat advanced in years, he unhesitatingly accepted the Oregon appointment and became pastor of a church in Albany, Oregon. He was killed in a steamboat accident on the Willamette River, near Oregon City, April 8, 1854. *The Evangelical Repository* (August, 1854), XIII, 184-186.

The Reverend Joseph M'Kee did not go to Oregon. *Infra*, I, Doc. J.

35 The Reverend Hugh K. Lusk and the Reverend David W. French belonged to the Presbytery of Cambridge.

36 No further information has been discovered in relation to any of these men.

37 I have found no record in the *Minutes* of any report made by this committee. The American Missionary Association, formed in 1846, was a home and foreign missionary society that refused to have any connection with slavery or with slave-holders. A statement

2. That a committee of three be appointed to address a circular to the churches in regard to the support of this mission.

Messrs. Law, Banks, and J. P. Smart, the committee.³⁸

On motion, 1. *Resolved*, that the missionaries sent to Oregon have power to constitute themselves into a Presbytery, to be called the Presbytery of Oregon.

2. *Resolved*, that a committee be appointed to inquire into the practicability of procuring a printing press, to be sent with our missionaries to Oregon.

Messrs. Young,³⁹ Banks, and Dr. Cooper, the committee.

On motion, *Resolved*, that the case of the Rev. Thomas S. Kendall,⁴⁰ formerly referred to the Presbytery of Iowa, be transmitted to the Presbytery of Oregon. . . .

The committee appointed to confer with the missionaries elect to Oregon, reported that they had agreed to accept the appointment.

. . .

On motion, *Resolved*, that a committee be appointed to confer with the gentlemen who were elected Trustees of the Oregon Mission, to ascertain their acceptance of that appointment, and report to Synod.

Messrs. Austin and Collins the committee.⁴¹

On motion, *Resolved*, that an edition of the Declaration and Testimony of this church be published, to consist of at least twenty-five hundred copies, and that Mr. Wm. S. Young of Philadelphia be appointed to superintend the publication.

On motion, *Resolved*, that one hundred copies of the Testimony, and fifty copies of the Confession of Faith, be sent out with our missionaries to Oregon. . . .

of the "Principles of the Association," in 1850, includes the following: "Any person of evangelical sentiments, who professes faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is not a slaveholder, or in the practice of other immoralities, and who contributes to the funds, may become a member. . . . This Society . . . will endeavour particularly to discountenance slavery, by refusing to receive the known fruits of unrequited labour, or to welcome to its employment those who hold their fellow-beings as slaves." American Missionary Association, *The Fourth Annual Report* (New York, 1850), inside of back cover.

38 The Reverend Isaac Law, of the Presbytery of Cambridge, Putnam, New York; the Reverend Joseph Banks, of the Presbytery of Allegheny, Allegheny, Penna.; and the Reverend James P. Smart, of the Presbytery of Miami, Xenia, Ohio.

39 William S. Young, a printer and publisher of Philadelphia, was a ruling elder in the Presbytery of Philadelphia. Both *The Christian Instructor* and *The Evangelical Repository* were printed in his establishment at 50 N. Sixth Street, Philadelphia.

40 The Reverend Thomas S. Kendall, a minister of the Associate Church, went to Oregon by the overland route in 1845. The puzzling reference to him here is not cleared up by any of the documents which have come to my attention. That his ministerial standing was not seriously affected seems evident from the fact that he was subsequently recognized by his fellow ministers in Oregon. In a letter dated at Oregon City, July 11, 1851, the Reverend James P. Miller discusses at some length the situation of Mr. Kendall, but does not clear up the difficulty. He assumes that his correspondent is acquainted with the facts in the case. *The Evangelical Repository* (October, 1851), X, 231-232.

41 The Reverend J. G. Austin, of the Presbytery of Cambridge, Chateaugay, New York; the Reverend Samuel Collins, of the Presbytery of Illinois, Racine County, Wisconsin.

[Wednesday, May 29.]

. . . On motion, *Resolved*, that the ministers and congregations of the Associate Church be urged to contribute as liberally and speedily as practicable to the different funds of the Synod, and especially to the funds of the Domestic and Oregon mission, and the Trinidad mission, if continued, and that it be understood that the missionaries to Oregon, shall proceed to that territory as soon as they may find it practicable, after the amount to be paid to them as outfit and salary shall be collected, and that they be not considered as authorized to do so sooner. . . .

The committee to confer with the persons elected as trustees of the Oregon mission, reported that Messrs. M'Gay and Geery agreed to accept, but that Mr. David Duncan declines.

On motion, Mr. John Duncan was elected in his room. . . .⁴²

[Thursday, May 30.]

The committee appointed to confer with Mr. Duncan, relative to his acceptance as a trustee of the Oregon mission, reported that he agreed to accept. . . .

Report of the Committee on the Apportionment of the Funds

Your committee would report that, according to the estimate which we have made, the money necessary to sustain the Synod in all her operations will not fall short of \$10,000; namely, Home Missions, \$3,800; Oregon Mission, \$3,600; Trinidad, \$1,600; Synod's Fund, \$1,000.

Taking the statistical table of last year, we find that the amount required, in case each member of our church would be willing to bear an equal proportion, would amount to no more than sixty-five cents to each. With this, certainly none can feel oppressed. . . .

[Friday, May 31.]

The select committee, to prepare an address on the subject of raising funds immediately, presented the following report, which was adopted:

Report of Committee on Address to our Congregations on Funds

The committee appointed to prepare an address, urging the necessity of immediately raising funds for carrying on the different missions, would submit the following:

⁴² John Duncan, a ruling elder of the Presbytery of Albany.

DEAR BRETHREN: The Synod having had represented before them, the urgent need of commencing a mission in Oregon, and also of continuing the mission in Trinidad, have unanimously agreed to prosecute both of these missions. As it is very important that the missionaries be in their respective fields of labour at as early a day as possible, we are constrained to call upon you to contribute immediately to both of these objects.

It is judged advisable that the missionaries for Trinidad do not set out until a thousand dollars are raised, and those for Oregon, until twenty-five hundred. That no time be lost, we earnestly ask you to take immediate action, and contribute, not to one, but to both of these missions. . . .

On motion, resolved, that if any emergency should arise which might, in the judgment of the board of Trustees of the Oregon Mission, require it, that they be authorized to call on Dr. Cooper, of Philadelphia, and Mr. Morrow,^{42a} of Albany, to unite with them as consultative members. . . .

On motion, resolved, that the Board of Home Missions be authorized to fill any vacancy, which may occur by death or otherwise, in the mission to Oregon, and that the Board of Foreign Missions have the same authority with respect to the mission to Trinidad. . . .

G.

CONDITION OF OREGON*

Oregon City, O. T., August 1, 1850.

DEAR BROTHER DALES:⁴³ I have no language with which to express the gratification your kind letter afforded me. Anything from the States, when one is so far from his ministerial brethren, and in such perfect seclusion from his church as I have been for the last two years, must be refreshing. You will naturally appreciate the pleasure your favours gave me.

You will doubtless have heard many glowing accounts from this country, but you will not soon have a correct idea of it unless you see it for yourself. It is original in nearly all its features. Before I came here I had read much of forest trees and lofty mountains, and a pure atmosphere, which seemed more like fancy sketches than

^{42a} The Reverend S. F. Morrow, Albany, New York.

*"From a long and deeply interesting letter just received from an esteemed brother who went out as a missionary from the A. R. Synod of the West, about two years since, we make the following extracts.—Ed."

⁴³ This letter, addressed to the Reverend John B. Dales, was published in *The Christian Instructor* (December, 1850), n. s., VII, 50-51.

reality. But personal observation has convinced me that in many respects the sketch comes short of the reality.

Our society is quite as unique as our natural scenery. The proximity of Oregon to the California gold mines has given rise to an unsettled habit in all our people, so that no man knows what new enterprise will snatch him from his location of to-day into some new association to-morrow.

. . . My labours in the ministry have been confined entirely to Oregon City and Linn City, and have consisted principally of a forenoon and afternoon sermon, and a Sabbath School and Bible Class each Lord's day; . . . and though I have had some embarrassments to contend with, I cherish a good hope for the future. We are delighted with our location, and find the country all we had anticipated. Our population is rapidly on the increase, and we hope for a more settled population hereafter.

The general affairs of our church here are encouraging, and if a suitable amount of ministerial labour could be enjoyed we could easily have a pleasant Presbytery in this territory. I was pleased to see in your Periodical the notice of the new basis of Union. I hope that project will be consummated. We are virtually one here. Thus far, at least, Associate, Associated Reformed, and Reformed Presbyterians, have all gone hand in hand. All seem to have forgotten that they once belonged to different churches. So generally and decidedly is the sentiment here in favour of Union, that the prospect is favourable to the organization of an "Oregon United Presbyterian Church." We have at present three principal settlements: 1st, Oregon City and County; 2d, Calapooza, in Linn county; and 3d, Cowalitz, in Lewis county.

. . . Oregon is a good missionary field, and if I could I would delight above all things to devote my whole energy to the advancement of the cause here. Our population will be very nearly doubled by immigration this fall, and we feel the necessity of vigilance and activity in order to an equally rapid increase of religion. . . .

Yours truly in Christ,

WILSON BLAIN.

H.

The "Oregon Spectator," hailing from Oregon City, (O. T.) is also quite regularly received, considering the long distance it has to travel. It is edited by the Rev. Wilson Blain, of the Mission of the General Associate Reformed Synod of the West, and is evidently

doing a good work in favour of Religion, Temperance, and general Education and Intelligence in that new and interesting section of our great Republic. We prize its visits much.⁴⁴

I.

THE OREGON MISSION⁴⁵

Agreeably to the anticipation expressed in our last number, we paid a visit to New York, that we might once more enjoy the pleasure of an interview with brother Miller and his family. He expected to start on Friday, the 11th of April; but the vessel did not set sail until the following Tuesday. On Thursday, the 10th, a public meeting was held in the church of the Rev. Dr. M'Elroy. The meeting was one of peculiar interest to us; and if we may judge from the indications given, it was not without interest to those present.

The meeting was opened with prayer by the Rev. Mr. M'Laren; after which, and the singing of a Psalm, addresses were delivered by Rev. Mr. Wright, of the Associate Reformed Church, the writer of this notice, Rev. Mr. Harper, and Rev. J. G. Smart, in the order in which we have referred to them.⁴⁶ Brother Miller, while they were taking up a collection, made a few pertinent remarks on the reasons that induced the Associate Church to select Oregon as a field for missionary labour. The meeting continued until nearly 10 o'clock, P. M., when it was dismissed by prayer and the apostolic benediction. . . .

J.

*Minutes of the Associate Synod of North America, at their Fiftieth Annual Meeting, Held in Xenia, Ohio, May 22, 1851, and Continued, by Adjournment, to the 30th.*⁴⁷

[Thursday, May 29.]

. . . The committee on Missions presented the following report on the Oregon missions, which, after some amendment, was adopted, as follows:

⁴⁴ *The Christian Instructor* (September, 1850), n. s., VI, 351. *The Oregon Spectator*, the first newspaper in the Oregon Country, was first issued in Oregon City, February 5, 1846. For a brief history of this newspaper, see George H. Himes, "History of the Press of Oregon, 1839-1850," in *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* (December, 1902), III, 337 *et seq.*

⁴⁵ *The Evangelical Repository* (June, 1851), X, 24-25. These introductory paragraphs are followed by a "journal letter" from James P. Miller to Dr. Joseph T. Cooper, dated April 19-23, 1851.

⁴⁶ The Reverend William M'Laren, pastor of the Fourth Associate Reformed Church of New York; the Reverend A. H. Wright, pastor of the Fifth Associated Reformed Church of New York; the Reverend James Harper, pastor of the Second Associate Congregation of New York; the Reverend J. G. Smart, of the Presbytery of Cambridge (without charge, 1851). The "writer of this notice" was Dr. Joseph T. Cooper.

⁴⁷ *The Evangelical Repository* (July, 1851), X, 84-95.

*Report of the Committee on Missions on the Report of the
Trustees of the Oregon Mission Fund*

The Trustees report, that up to December they had not received more than sufficient funds to send out to the [*sic*] Missionaries appointed, without their families, and that under these circumstances Mr. M'Kee resigned, and the vacancy was filled by the appointment of the Rev. Samuel G. Irvine.

They also state that in the Fall, passages might have been obtained for \$300, exclusive of the expenses on the Isthmus, if they had had sufficient assurance that the funds could have been relied on to be forthcoming when needed.

The Trustees estimated the expenses of the voyage of Brother Miller and his family, including \$550 on account of salary, at \$2005. This sum was paid to Mr. Miller, but he is expected to render an exact account of his actual expenses. Besides this sum, Mr. Miller was subject to various other expenses in carrying out his appointment, amounting to \$393, which the Trustees agreed ought to be allowed.

It is suggested in the report that the salaries allowed the missionaries will be found inadequate.

The Trustees acknowledge the receipt of \$2974.52. They claim credit for \$2174.35, leaving a balance on hand, of \$800.17, on May 19th, 1851. There is an acknowledgment in their account of \$12.00, from the Home Mission Fund, which your committee think requires explanation.

With reference to this report, your committee recommend the adoption, by Synod, of the following resolutions:

Resolved, 1. That the Synod cordially approve of the appointment of the Rev. S. G. Irvine, in the place of Mr. M'Kee.

Resolved, 2. That the Trustees are authorized to liquidate the actual expenses of Brother Miller's voyage.

Resolved, 3. That the sum of \$200 be allowed Mr. Miller, for expenses in transporting his goods to Oregon.

Resolved, 4. That the sum of \$193 be allowed Mr. Miller for expenses incurred in boxing up his goods, conveying them and his family to New York, and in boarding himself and family while necessarily detained there.

Resolved, 5. That no change in the salary of the Missionaries be made until they report their experience of its inadequacy.

Resolved, 6. That the time has come, when the Head of the church is loudly calling on the Associate church to adopt a systematic plan of contributing to the Lord's treasury, or our worldly substance, and that the Synod will devise such a plan at the present meeting, and urge it on the prayerful attention of our people.

Resolved, 7. That the Trustees be respectfully requested to procure, if practicable, the sum of \$1000, on the credit of the Synod, and to despatch the Rev. S. G. Irvine to Oregon without delay.

Resolved, 8. That the Synod feel the necessity of continuing instant in prayer for the Divine blessing on all their missionary efforts, and that all the members of the church are expected to bring this special subject frequently before the Throne of Grace, that the good work in which we are engaged may be blessed and prospered of the Lord.

JOS. BANKS,
S. HINDMAN,
S. COLLINS,
W. M'NARY,

Committee. . . .

[Friday, May 30th.]

. . . The report of the Committee on Missions on the Oregon Mission was again taken up, and the following resolution was adopted, as a substitute for the seventh resolution in that report. Resolved, that in view of the embarrassed condition of the funds, the Board of Oregon Mission be directed to send Mr. S. G. Irvine to Oregon by the overland route, if consistent with his pleasure, at the earliest practicable date, and that in the mean time Mr. Irvine be employed by the Board of Home Missions. . . .⁴⁸

K.

[From the Preacher]

LETTER FROM OREGON⁴⁹

Union Point, Linn Co., O. T., July 5th, 1851.

REV. AND DEAR SIR: I hope I shall now be able to communicate a few items of intelligence which may be interesting to your

⁴⁸ Samuel G. Irvine went to Oregon in 1851, but not by the overland route. He sailed from New York on August 27, 1851. *The Evangelical Repository* (July, 1852), XI, 81. He was present at the formation of the Associate Presbytery of Oregon and was elected clerk of that body. *Ibid.* (February, 1852), X, 484. Mr. Irvine was born at Wooster, Ohio, August 14, 1826. He prepared for the ministry at the Theological Seminary of the Associate Church, Canonsburgh, Penna., graduating from that institution in 1850.

⁴⁹ *The Christian Instructor* (November, 1851), n. s., VIII, 30-31. This letter was also published in *The Evangelical Repository* (November, 1851), X, 311-312. It was first

readers. We have at length completed the organization of the Associate Reformed Congregation in this place. We have only fourteen persons in actual membership. There were, however, some other persons prevented from coming forward by various providences. Our whole strength is about eighteen or twenty. Josiah Osborn and John Findley are the elders of the church. The prospects of the congregation are encouraging.

I am frequently receiving information of the settlement of individuals of our church in various parts of the Territory, but the multiplicity of my cares here prevents me from visiting them. I understand that two members of the Mansfield (Ohio) congregation, by the name of Laughridge, have located in the Umpqua Valley, which is some eighty miles south of this place. It is a delightful country, and this may be the commencement of an important congregation.

After numerous disappointments, we have commenced our school. It sets out in the enjoyment of fair prospects. And here I may take occasion to say, that the books forwarded to me have been received in good condition, not having received the slightest damage; and if those generous friends who contributed to their purchase could only realize the amount of good they are doing here they would feel a glow of pleasure warm their hearts. The school is yet literally in its alphabet, but with proper cultivation it may yet be made to wield a mighty influence on the educational destiny of this Territory. As it is harvest time with us, our school is small at present, but there is no doubt but the tuition fees will be amply sufficient to sustain a teacher.

The Rev. James P. Miller, of the Associate Church, has arrived with his family. He will locate at Albany, the shire town of this county, and some twenty-five miles from my place. The Rev. Thomas S. Kendall resides with the main body of the Associate Church midway between this and Albany; thus it will be seen that this county is destined to become the center of orthodox Presbyterianism in this Territory. I will add that an Associate Reformed minister might be advantageously located twelve miles from us in this county, where I have at present a preaching station. Mingled as these two churches are in this district of country, it is not to be wondered at that we wait with solicitude the action of the churches at home on the subject of Union. We have held no conferences on the subject; but I

published in *The Preacher* (Pittsburgh, Penna.), a weekly newspaper edited by the Reverend David R. Kerr, a minister of the Associate Reformed Church.

think I may safely say that all parties, lay and clerical, are ready for union here, if the mother churches would lead the way.

I write, even at this advanced period of the season, in total ignorance as to the help we may expect by the coming immigration. Whether we are to have another minister, or any members, we know not.

There is a subject of great interest to us, and of untold importance to the cause of Christ in Oregon, to which I would direct the attention of the Associate Reformed Church. I noticed, some time since, that it was proposed by the Associate Synod to send with their mission a printing establishment. Now, as the press may be used here as a powerful engine for good in the common cause of the two churches, would it not be proper for the Associate Reformed Church to assist in the enterprise? If we could be furnished with a press and other materials for publishing a small paper, such as would be adapted to the wants of this Territory, the establishment could be so conducted as to make it defray its own expenses. There is not in the whole Territory a paper that can claim more than the most ordinary morality. Nor is there a press in Oregon that will dare to publish a word against Popery. We must and will have a paper devoted to the advocacy of religion, Protestantism, temperance, morals, education, &c. And if the orthodox churches will forward the press, to be conducted under the supervision of the associated ministry of the Associate and Associate Reformed Churches, it will at once place this important means of influence and usefulness in our hands; but if this is not done, the enterprise will soon pass into the hands of some other denominations. The cost of the enterprise would really be less than nothing, compared with the advantage it would be to sound religious principle in this Territory. Let us have a press at the earliest possible period. The advantages and importance of this enterprise are so manifest that they need but to be mentioned to be appreciated.

Your friend, truly,

WILSON BLAIN.

(Continued in October Issue)

J. ORIN OLIPHANT