

ally conservative without the gift of prophetic vision or the index of manifest destiny could not but regard it in that light. Under such conditions to lend further inducement to the westward movement of a people already possessed of a perverse bent in that direction seemed to invite a future separation into Atlantic and Pacific nations.

The termination of the ten-year agreement in 1828 made some diplomatic action on the matter necessary. England's interests on the Columbia were now too substantial and preponderant for her to recede in deference to any claim of title based on discovery and exploration. And, further, deceived as to the character of the country she could see no reason for doubting her ability to maintain her supremacy there. The cause of the United States could hardly develop a weaker aspect than it presented at that time. Both were, therefore, willing to bide their time and continue the status of so-called joint occupation indefinitely subject to termination on a year's notice.

Our chain of right to Oregon had snapped in our failure to hold our own against the strongly organized English trade. But we might easily forego that form of occupation if we could only forge the link of occupation by home-builders. The other links to the chain of our title had been so gloriously welded to fail at this point would be a national disgrace. So thought many. The idea was soon to warm a host of pioneers. It had already set one mind aflame.

Hall J. Kelley, a Boston school teacher, became in 1815 an enthusiast for saving the Oregon country to the Union through colonization. From 1824 on he gave himself up to the work of agitation. In 1828 an emigration society with a large membership was organized. This was incorporated in 1831, and the spring of 1832 was fixed upon as the time for setting out on an overland expedition to Oregon. But something more than enthusiasm was needed to get an expedition even mustered, equipped and started for Oregon, to say nothing of conducting it successfully through two thousand miles of wilderness.

While preparations for the expedition by the Boston Colonization Society were in progress Nathaniel J. Wyeth, then twenty-nine years old and superintending a flourishing business with some separate interests of his own, became impressed with the idea there was a role for him in executing one of his country's trusts for civilization. There was in the Oregon territory a remnant of the continent still to be subdued to man's higher uses and he felt his fitness for the work. He says, "I cannot divest myself of the opinion that I shall compete better with my fellow men in new and untried paths than in those to pursue which requires only patience and attention." He partially engaged to attach himself with a company to the expedition planned by the Society of which Kelley was the secretary.

Kelley, the moving spirit of this undertaking, wished to transplant a Massachusetts town to Oregon and make it the nucleus of