

PIONEER LAYMEN OF NORTH AMERICA

not add to the validity of the contract nor confer any sacramental grace. When the priest arrived, of course McLoughlin, like the genuine Catholic that he was, had the marriage blessed.

While in the midst of these difficulties with the missionaries a new problem presented itself. Settlers began to pour in from the United States to take possession of the land. The first emigration took place in 1841. But of the one hundred and twenty-five who came that year fully one-half left in the spring for California. In 1843 another band, numbering 875, men, women and children, started from Fort Independence, Mo., on their long journey across the Rockies to the Pacific. They were led by Peter H. Burnett, who afterward became the first Governor of California, and is known to the reading public as the author of "The Path that Led a Protestant Lawyer to the Catholic Religion." Looking over the list of emigrants, we discover only a few names in any way suggestive of Catholicity. There is a James Brady, a family of Delaneys, a Daniel Cronin, a Doherty, a McGee, a McGarry, a McHaley, two O'Briens, an O'Neil and a Trainor; but all the rest were what people in those days used to call "native Americans."

After six months of terrible suffering they reached Fort Vancouver. Their condition is thus described by Bancroft ("History of N. W. Coast," Vol. II, p. 706):

"These lean, cadaverous, dirt-tanned ox-drivers, with bushy heads and dull, unintelligent eyes, followed by famine-visaged women and children, cold and ill, barefooted and with only rags for raiment, arriving in the wet autumn, absolutely without a dollar in any kind of property, having lost all upon their way, and many of their former companions even their lives, what were they going to do in this cold, cheerless wilderness without house or tent or hut even, without blankets or clothes or meat or bread? Simply starve."

But McLoughlin was there. Because of their misery he received them with open arms, in spite of the suspicion with which he knew they regarded him. He had already sent boats