

PIONEER LAYMEN OF NORTH AMERICA

than a wedge stuck in between Washington and California. It was everything west of the Rockies that Spain did not claim. Then Chief Factor McLoughlin, whom popular imagination regarded as not having a soul above a beaver skin, used to retire to his fort and offer up prayer for those in peril by land and sea."

Hubert Bancroft gives a picture of McLoughlin visiting in person some parts of his vast domain to inspect its management. It is of special interest because his squaw wife enters upon the scene. Seated astride the finest horse, whose trappings were ornamented with colored quills, beads and fringes, to which hung tiny bells that tinkled with every motion, herself dressed in a petticoat of the finest blue broadcloth, with embroidered scarlet leggings, and moccasins stiff with the most costly beads, her black braided hair surmounted by a hat trimmed with gay ribbon or supporting drooping feathers, she presented a picture, if not as elegant as that of a lady of the sixteenth century at a hawking party, yet quite as striking and brilliant.

When the caravan was in progress it was a panorama of gaiety, as each man of the party, from chief trader and clerk down to the last trapper in the train, filed past with his ever-present and faithful helpmate in her prettiest dress. After them came the Indian boys, driving the pack-ponies loaded with goods and camp utensils. Indeed, the camp equipage consisted of everything necessary for comfortable lodging and a bountiful table, the cook being an important member of the numerous retinue. Here was feudalism on the western seaboard. The Canadian farmers were serfs to all intents and purposes, yet with such a kindly lord that they scarcely felt their bondage; or if they felt it they realized it was for their good.

When McLoughlin first went to Oregon the religious conditions of the Indians were surprising and for a moment were, even to him, perplexing. Bonneville, writing in 1634, says that "the Flatheads, Nez Percés, and Cayuses had a strong devotional feeling. So well advanced in the Christian religion were