

How We Got Oregon: Told by Ip-ha-thal-a-talc

By Charles N. Crewdson.

"We got Oregon through Marcus Whitman," said Major Moorhouse to me as we drove upon the Umatilla reservation one Sunday morning.

"Taats-mi-me" (Good morning), said the old woman as she turned her furrowed face toward us.

"Taats-mi-me," we answered back.

"That's old Ip-ha-thal-a-talc," said the major. "She's got in that Indian basket you see there on her arm a hymn book and a Bible that Mrs. Whitman gave her away back in the '20s when Dr. Whitman first came to this country as a missionary."

"She lives down the road here just a mile or so," "Suppose we go to see her," said I. "Will she talk to us?"

"Oh, yes. She is very friendly." Amid the cottonwoods which deck the valley of the Umatilla river live the honest, old-fashioned Ip-ha-thal-a-talc. She lived with her daughter Mary, who had taken a "white man's name," and her son Cougar Shirt. This was one of the few Indian families of the reservation that had not turned to the house the government built for it into a stable and kept on living in a tepee.

"Injun have no God when Brother Whitman came, long time ago. I young woman that time," began Ip-ha-thal-a-talc. "Injun believe earth his God. Land grow grass; pony eat grass; cow eat grass; deer eat grass; Injun eat deer; Injun eat root; Injun believe earth his mother. Injun believe earth let us have come to him; Injun believe it wrong to put him hoe in earth—all same put him knife in mother's breast."

"Brother Whitman come. He bring Book of Heaven. He make him heap talk. Sister Whitman come-pretty woman, long hair, many leaves when frost come. She bring sing book. She make him heap sing."

"Here old Ip-ha-thal-a-talc took out of her woven grass satchel her rusty Bible and hymn book and sang for us.

"There is a happy land, far, far away."

"Whitman put him hoe in ground, put him plow in ground. Heap grow. Whitman make him mill, make him flour, make him bread. Sister Whitman teach him Injun read, teach him Injun pray to Great Father. Some Injun say good; some Injun say bad. Some Injun work him plow; some Injun say he no work all same squaw."

"Bimhey little white papoose came—pettels (i. e., girl). She talk Injun talk; she sing Injun sing. All Injun love 'little white cayuse.' One day she fall in water she die. Injun very sorry. Some Injun say: 'Bad medicine.' 'We put little white Cayuse in ground. We sing that time.'"

"Here Ip-ha-thal-a-talc turned in her fingered Injun book to the page she knew so well and began to sing.

"Rock of Aves, chief for me. Let me hide myself in thee."

"We all joined the old woman, long since past her threescore and ten, as she led the song in a plaintive treble. A tear glistened in the major's eye. Perhaps he was thinking of the brief life of the missionary and his wife, falling at the risk of their lives among the western savages—all alone.

"Twenty-five years after the exploration of Lewis and Clark four Flathead Indians came to St. Louis and sought to find the mysterious 'Book of Heaven,' which they had seen in the far west. This incident was published in religious papers and a call was made for missionaries. Marcus Whitman and his wife were among the few who answered that call. They trekked over the plains in 1836 and crossed the Rockies in the first wagon that ever went to Oregon. They began their missionary life at Waiilatpu, not a great distance from the present Umatilla reservation.

"Bimhey Whitman go away. Away long time. He come back, bring him heap Boston man (a name given



Descendant of Alexander McKay.



Tomahawk which Killed Whitman.



Yellow Hair.

the whites by the Indians); heap cow; heap hoe; heap dig him land; heap eat. Injun say: 'Bostons get Injuns' land.'

"Thus Ip-ha-thal-a-talc briefly told of Whitman's long ride in '42 from the Pacific coast to the nation's capital and his leading back a thousand immigrants who would settle the question as to whether Oregon, which then was the name given to all of the present United States north of California and west of the Rockies, should belong to England or to the United States. It claimed this region because Captain Gray in 1792 discovered the Columbia river, and because Lewis and Clark first explored the northwest. Yet Great Britain also had a claim for Oregon so strong that the two nations agreed for many years that they should jointly occupy this region.

"One night in '42 Whitman was at the dinner table with many Englishmen. News came that 150 Britons had come into Oregon. One young fellow threw up his cap and cried out: 'That means we get Oregon for Old England!' Whitman never said a word. In three days he started on horseback and rode through the winter snows from Oregon to Washington City that he might tell the people what a great country Oregon was, and that they should not let England have it. Taylor was president then; Daniel Webster his secretary. Statesmen believed Oregon worthless; that settlers could get there. Many praised God because he had built a high mountain wall on our western border. Whitman wanted to lead a band of settlers to Oregon. 'You can't get a wagon across the Rockies,' said senators. Whitman answered, 'I have already taken one over them.'

"That settled it. The words of this missionary-pioneer, weather-worn and frostbitten from his 3,000-mile horseback ride across the snowy continent, as he stood before Taylor and Webster, clad in skins carried their own proof. They believed Whitman; they trust-



Sweet House.

ed him. He led 1,000 Americans across the Rockies. England never got Oregon.

"You, Injun say: 'Boston man get Injun land,' said the old woman again. "Boston man bring him sick, measles. Injun catch him measles. Whitman give him Injun white man medicine. Injun take Injun medicine—all same build him little house; cover him house with buffalo skin; make him rocks hot; put him hot rocks in house;

pour him water on rocks; make him water all same cloud; hot cloud make him Injun sweat; Injun jump in river; water cold; Injun die. Injun say Whitman give him bad medicine. Injun say: 'We kill Whitman.'

"Thus Ip-ha-thal-a-talc gave the last of many reasons for which the Indians massacred the missionary. There was a feeling against Whitman on the part of the Hudson Bay company. They knew Whitman had foiled their plans. They did not want the country settled by farmers. They bought furs from the Indians. The coming of the farmer meant the going of the beaver—the breaking up of their business. To be sure, the Hudson Bay company did not plan to kill Whitman, but their ill-will against him went from the English to the Indians. One Joe Lewis, a half-breed, told the Indians that Dr. Whitman was poisoning them. They sent a woman sick with measles to the missionary doctor. He gave her medicine. She also took the Indian medicine—the sweat bath. When she bobbed up out of the cold water she, too, was dead. That was proof to the Indians. They plotted on Nov. 29, 1847, and killed the missionary and his wife.

"But may we let Ip-ha-thal-a-talc tell about this: 'Big shame on Indian! My eye heap cry. Brother Whitman go see sick woman. He come home. Sister Whitman in house. Heap white people in house. Heap Injun come in house. Bad Injun, Tam-chas for name, take him tomahawk; Blackfoot Indian give him Cayuse big bow-wow long time ago; Tam-chas hit Brother Whitman on head two time. Whitman fall. He no dead yet. Te-lau-kat come, hit Whitman in face with tomahawk; cut face, face look bad. Whitman no talk plain; heap hurt. Sister Whitman take him in big room. She go on knee. She pray Great Father. 'God help my husband. God help my people. God help me. God help Injun; he no know.'

On Thanksgiving

THE GENIAL IDIOT.

By John Kendrick Bangs

"WELL, Mrs. Pedagog," said the Idiot, with a broad and genial smile, as he dropped his newspaper and directed his attention to the commissary department. "I presume that, with your usual foresight, you have already laid your plans for next Thursday's banquet."

"Certainly have, Mr. Idiot," replied the good lady addressed. "And what is more, I am going to profit by my last year's experience, which taught me never to judge a man's appetite by his lack of property. All you gentlemen were so cast down by your troubles of the year previous to last Thanksgiving, that I thought you would come to the table with an impaired appetite, but not one of you did so. With the result that when we were finished upstairs, there wasn't even a wishbone left for the kitchen; and every atom of cranberry had disappeared into your thankless throats, and your pumpkin pie, I dare say you must have eaten even the plates, for three of them disappeared and have never turned up since."

"I don't remember any such paucity of food," began the Idiot.

"No," said the landlady. "You naturally wouldn't say, saying that you didn't care what part of the turkey you got, you actually consumed four slices of white meat, two drumsticks, two second joints, a wishbone, together with six tin-bits as was subsequently able to extract for your benefit from the carcass."

"Well, my dear madame, can you blame me?" said the Idiot. "Your cranberry sauce was so really good that I had to eat something else to cover up my inroads into the seemingly perennial supply."

"There's no harm done," rejoined the landlady. "Both the turkey and the sauce, not to mention the pumpkin pie, were designed for the purpose to which you put them. I only object when my plates disappear."

"I plead not guilty to the plates," put in the Idiot. "I haven't eaten a bit of crockery for twenty-five years. I judge from the china crew that Mr. Brief gives me occasionally that it is he who hath done you this injury—or perhaps the Bibliomaniac. I have known ex-booklovers whose passion for rare plates remained long after their libraries had passed into the auction room."

"Tut!" said the Bibliomaniac, scornfully. "Otherwise," said the landlady, "I shall be ready for you next Thursday. I have had a propitious period of it this year. I judge from the china crew that I have been reduced to the point so you see I can afford to give you individual turkeys and a separate pumpkin pie each if I deem it necessary."

"By Jove, Mrs. Pedagog, cried the Idiot enthusiastically, "you are a very Carnegie of landladies—large hearted, and a believer in profit sharing. If my latest enterprise on Wall street goes through, I think I shall make you general manager."

"Yes," said the Idiot. "I am working up the Empire City Consolidated Boarding House corporation. We propose to corner all the boarding houses in the city, and by putting them upon a sounder economic basis, make dollars sprout from hitherto barren soil. We shall have a landlady general to look after the whole outfit; a bureau of complaints where, when things go wrong, protests may be sent so that the everlasting growling at the breakfast table by dissatisfied boarders will become a thing of the past; and that bureau, I judge, will be occupied by a front parlor with a folding bed in it, looks down upon the poor soul who can afford only a pigeon hole called a hall bedroom on the fourth floor back, will be eradicated

by a simple device of my own—to concentrate all our hall bedrooms into a dozen large buildings located in different parts of the city, within walking distance of those places of business where hall-bedrooms most do congregate.

"Another bubble, eh?" said Mr. Brief. "Not this time," said the Idiot. "Mine is a bona fide corporation. We have only \$5,000,000 worth of shares to sell, and we have in actual cash in our treasury, a fund of \$100."

"That's encouraging in these days of high finance," said the Lawyer. "Who are your officers and directors?"

"Up to now," replied the Idiot, "I'm the whole thing—president, secretary, treasurer and board of directors. I'll give you a directorship if you'll take 5,000 shares at 10."

"Thanks," said Mr. Brief. "I'd rather spend my money betting on the election of Dowd and Nation as the next president and vice president of the United States."

"All right," said the Idiot. "Have your own way. I didn't know you were a roofer for that sort of thing. But you are assured of a rich and substantial Thanksgiving dinner, owing to the generosity of our dear landlady, the next thing for us to think about is what are we thankful for. The president has proclaimed that we are thankful and knowing him for the man he is, I venture the assertion that he stands ready to lick anybody who says he isn't thankful."

"Well, I'm not," said the lawyer. "My business has been rotten for a year."

"Well, I'm sorry for you, Mr. Brief, but, on the whole, I can't give you my full sympathy. I suppose the lawyer's millennium would be here when every man, woman and child in the world was involved in a lawsuit of one kind or another. Universal contention requiring the service

of the law courts would bring about a condition of prosperity in legal circles alongside of which the Klondike would be a salted mine. You mustn't look at the thing in a selfish way, though, Mr. Brief. When the president calls upon us to be thankful for blessings received, he calls upon us as a nation, not as individuals—though for my part I am just as thankful as an individual as I could be as a nation. I haven't made any money the past year, but when I think of the things I've stayed out of because of my actual poverty, I rise up and bless that poverty and bless the powers that be for that they have permitted me to pass through this year of opportunity unscathed."

"That's the way of it, eh?" said the Anglomaniac. "Not thanks for benefits received, but for pitfalls escaped."

"You put it in a nutshell," rejoined the Idiot. "And I tell you, sir, in that little recipe lies a guarantee of happiness for every man. Things are never so bad but that in some way they might be worse, and for my part as long as there is a sun shining in the heavens you'll find me thankful for something."

"And suppose there isn't a sun shining in the heavens?" demanded the lawyer. "Suppose the fog is so thick you can't cut it with a knife?"

"Then I shall be thankful for the fog," replied the Idiot. "Fog is good for the complexion, and if I need to have my way through it to get to business, or home to dinner, and a knife won't do the job for me, why I'll take an axe to it. The idea of anybody not being thankful these days is preposterous. What is the matter with people anyhow that they don't realize their blessings?"

"You might name a few," said the Bibliomaniac.

"Well, take your own case," observed the Idiot. "You haven't been shoved off the earth by anybody yet, have you?"

"Not that I know of," said the Bibliomaniac. "You've attended to your business every day since last Thanksgiving," continued the Idiot. "You've come and gone daily, and so far nothing has happened to you. You haven't fallen into the subway. You haven't been run over by an automobile. You haven't been jerked from the end of a trolley car going round a curve, nor smashed your ribs by being blown up against the Flatiron building by a playful March gizzard. As a bachelor, suppose, yielding to the temptations of the moment, he had gone into the business and done well enough to salt away \$250,000 of other people's money, and then been indicted by a grand jury? Would he have been here with us today? Would he have had the delicious prospect of an individual turkey; a special private, pumpkin pie, and all the cranberry sauce he can eat, staring him in the face, and due to be consumed on Thursday next? Not he. He would be, according to some, up in Sing Sing with a steady 5 of five years' duration in the same line ahead of him, and a Thanks-

giving dinner of pork and beans and corned beef to look forward to. And yet he's not thankful. There peer out between the bars of their cells upon this ungrateful man, would write in envy of this lot of his of which he complains."

"To be out of jail, then, is the height of happiness," asked the lawyer.

"Well, I don't say that exactly," returned the Idiot. "But, on the whole, it is a desirable condition, and however indifferent you may be in the matter, I personally am mighty glad that I am still here, for you instead of in some such populous if not popular, hostelry as Sing Sing, Dannemora or Moyamensing."

"You make me smile," put in the doctor. "You, with your ingrowing wisdom, interrupted the Idiot. "Et tu Brute? Well, I am surprised, that you, doctor, of all men should take this attitude of cavilling against the things of this world; that you, who more often than any of us have looked within, and are supposed to know all about the real misgivings of humanity, who know the value of a cheerful disposition in meeting the ills of life, should at this time line up with the pessimists, is a matter of some surprise, and a real regret to me. 'All your studies reviewed,' queried the Idiot, "My business has nothing to do with it," retorted the doctor, "but I haven't had any blessings to speak of, so why should I pretend to be thankful?"

"All your studies reviewed," queried the Idiot; "or left for that bourne whence no traveler returns?"

"Never mind my practice—just tell me one thing that I should be thankful for," persisted the doctor.

"Well, the fact that you are no longer threatened with appendicitis, and therefore will not have to operate on yourself for that interesting disorder, or pay somebody else a cool thousand for doing it, should evoke a little bit of your gratitude," said the Idiot.

"Fosh!" returned the doctor, snapping his fingers in derision, "I never was threatened with appendicitis."

"All the more reason to be thankful," said the Idiot. "Considering how many thousands of people have been threatened either by appendicitis or an operation thereof—and one is as bad as another—you should be one of the most grateful fellows alive."

"I believe you'd be happy on an income of nothing a year."

"Yes, I think I would," said the Idiot. "And for a very good reason, I should know if my income got down as low as that, that whatever might happen in the future, no matter what disasters were to overtake others, my own income could never be less. That in itself should contribute to that serenity of mind and general attitude toward kindly providence that is one of the surest evidences of a clear conscience and a sunny heart."

There was silence for a moment, and then the Idiot rose from the table.

"Mrs. Pedagog," said he as he started to leave the room, "your generosity has touched me deeply. The dinner you promise for next Thursday is a glorious dream that seems almost too good to be true. I hope you will permit me to donate something toward it, not in money, but in materials."

"Why certainly, Mr. Idiot, if you wish," said the landlady. "I am sure we would all welcome anything you might have to contribute."

"Very well," said the Idiot. "I shall stop at the hardware store on my way downtown and send you three indestructible pie plates, which neither Mr. Brief nor the Bibliomaniac could masticate, nay, even with the law of Samson."

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Popular Songs that Have Paid Fortunes.

There are only five really popular song writers before the public today who compose their own words and music. They are James Thornton, Paul Dresser, Charles K. Harris, Dave Reed, Jr., and Andrew Mack, says the New York Sun.

Thornton, according to his own statement, has written songs that have earned for publishers nearly \$200,000. His latest song, "Sweet Sixteen," is said to have rewarded the publisher to the extent of \$50,000.

The method followed by Thornton in composing songs is vastly different from that of other writers. He knows little or nothing of music. He does not play the piano or any other musical instrument. He works by inspiration alone, he says.

"I have written some of my best known songs in a half-hour," he said to a reporter. "I usually write the words first and then compose the music. As soon as I get a melody that suits I retain it in my mind until I can have it taken down in notes by some one who understands music."

"I composed 'Sweet Sixteen' in twenty minutes, while I was nearly a month at 'She May Have Seen Better Days.' My 'Sweetheart' the Man in the Moon" was the effort of an hour, while it required over two months before I could complete 'When Summer Comes Again' to my entire satisfaction.

Charles K. Harris does not believe in inspiration. He wrote "After the Ball." When he was 29 he taught

the banjo in Milwaukee. He got the idea of writing songs by accompanying himself on the banjo for his own amusement.

His first real ballad hit was "Hearts," which he sold to a firm in Milwaukee for \$15. The publishers realized over \$15,000 in profits. In 1899 he composed "After the Ball." He offered it to May Howard, who refused it, stating that it was too long and draggy. It then went to the rounds of nearly fifty singers, who all turned it down.

Finally J. Aldrich Libby, who at the time was singing in Milwaukee, took it up and made an immediate success of it.

"All this talk about composers who write by inspiration makes me tired," said Harris. "I have no special time when I write. I do so when I am in the mood. It is a business proposition with me and I go about it like any one else who is after a living and a share of this world's goods."

"Before the run of 'After the Ball' was over I sold 1,500,000 copies. There has not been a song in the nineteenth century that has reached that figure, nor do I think there ever will be."

He is probably the wealthiest song writer in the world today.

Dresser was a variety performer before he began composing songs. His first song was "The Letter That Never Came." It was a hit, but he never received a cent for it.

His forte is "mother" songs. His best known efforts are, "On the Banks of the Wabash," "Just Tell

Them that You Saw Me" and "The Blue and the Gray."

"I usually work at night," said Dresser when asked how he turned out his songs. "I always select a quiet place, enjoy a smoke and then get down to business. Most of the themes of my songs were suggested to me."

"When I hear of an expression I make a mental note of it. If it is a good one I select it for a title and then get a good theme. After this is done I compose the song. I am usually slow in my work."

"Song writing is a lottery. Some songs which I thought would do very well have turned out to be failures and vice versa."

The only song writer before the public today who earns more than \$5,000 a year by writing the words alone and who is not connected with any firm in business is Will Cobb. He wrote "Good-Bye Dolly Gray."

"I Can't Tell Why I Love You," "When the Roses Bloom Again," and others.

But Edwards, who put the music to these songs, plays the piano only by ear and has to get some one to take his melodies down before the song is sent to the printer.

Harry von Tilzer is another successful composer of popular songs. He publishes his own songs and earns nearly \$50,000 a year, it is said. Billy Jerome, who wrote "Rip Van Winkle Was a Lucky Man," "Bedelia" and "Mister Dooley," was also an actor. All the music in Jerome's songs is furnished by Gene Schwartz. They are said to earn between them more than \$20,000 a year.